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The Literary Week.

THE biographer of the late Marquis of Dufferin and Ava has not yet been chosen, but Lady Dufferin, to whose charge all the papers and correspondence have been left, will be obliged if any of Lord Dufferin's friends will send her such letters as may be useful for the Life.

MR. JOHN MORLEY, who is now engaged in reading the final proofs of his *Life of Gladstone*, has, it is said, arranged the letters of the great Liberal statesman in different sections of the biography: that is, the correspondence that has been deemed worthy of embodiment in the Life appears under the respective headings of political, ecclesiastical, theological, and literary. Mr. Morley's *magnum opus* will almost certainly be published in the autumn of this year.

A STATEMENT has been published during the past week that a somewhat sensational volume of letters of Jane Welsh Carlyle is being prepared for early publication. These letters, which were collected by members of the inner circle of the Carlyle family, have been submitted, it is said, to Sir James Crichton Browne for reading and revision. Sir James has advised that they should be published for the sake of the fresh light they throw upon the domestic life of the Carlyles.

MR. HOWARD, the author of *Kiartan the Iclander*, which we review in this issue, has had a unique and gratifying experience. The other day a stranger called on Mr. J. M. Dent, his publisher, and left a bank note for £100 with a slip of paper on which was written: "From an admirer

north of the Tweed to the author of *Kiartan the Iclander*." This lover of books who showed his appreciation in so practical a way refused to disclose his name.

AN entirely new English text of Montaigne's *Essays and Letters* (founded on the now extremely scarce one published in 1877, in three volumes, octavo) has now been brought to completion and will be published by Messrs. Reeves and Turner. It will be edited by Mr. W. C. Hazlitt, and partly by reason of enlarged introductory matter and partly of additional notes, it will extend to four volumes. The edition of 1877 was superintended by Mr. Hazlitt's father, though bearing his own name on the title, and he merely contributed the Preface. The book has now at length been adapted to the last French *variorum* so far as possible, and innumerable errors of the former English versions have been rectified. The biographical account of the essayist has been considerably amplified, and instead of the sixteen Letters given in 1877 there are thirty-five, many of which are of interest and importance towards understanding the life of the author. A salient feature in the present undertaking is the substitution for the English colloquial equivalents or rather supposed equivalents of the great Frenchman's language the words which he actually used, or the sense which he actually intended to convey; and the difference is often curious and sometimes immense between him and his English renderers.

THE *Lancet* ought to take up the question of medicinal literature and prescribe the proper books which shall soothe or stimulate the pulses of hospital patients. In her *Lights and Shadows in a Hospital* Mrs. Terton shows how empiricism practices on disease with a book. There was a melancholy man, depressed with rheumatism, in her cottage hospital. The point was to cheer him up. Ordinary hospital literature was no good. At last said the nurse, "I shall read him *Three Men in a Boat*, and if that doesn't amuse him, I shall give him up as hopeless." So she read, till finally "a reluctant smile came over his face, and he said, with slow satisfaction: 'I do think they be three rum 'uns.'" That was the turning-point in his illness. He recovered completely, and left the hospital a bright and cheerful man. Mr. Jerome, when critics sneer at him because he is not M. Maeterlinck, will henceforth be able to retort that Maeterlinck will not cure rheumatism. What would be the best book for, say, St. Vitus' Dance? Something very soothing would be required.

THE terrible news from St. Vincent, following the impression that this island had escaped the volcanic deluge which has cremated half Martinique, at once recalls and reverses the famous hoax by which Daniel Defoe led all London to believe, in 1718, that the whole island of St. Vincent had been blown up and obliterated. On the basis of his own imagination, or on some thin ship story, Defoe wrote in *Mist's Journal* a circumstantial account of the destruction of this island, giving such details as, with all our facilities of news transmission, we wait for in vain to-day. After leading up very gradually to the catastrophe,

he told his readers that, "on the night of the said 26th, about Midnight, the whole Island of St. Vincent rose up in the Air, with a most dreadful eruption of Fire from underneath the Earth, and an inconceivable Noise in the Air at its rising up, that it was not only blown up, but blown out of the very sea, with a dreadful force, as it were torn up by the Roots, or blown up from the Foundations of the Earth." Finally, to bring the event home to his readers he recalled an accident in a foundry in Moorfields where a quantity of liquid gun-metal coming into contact with some water had blown up the works—just as a journalist of to-day might perhaps recall the recent destructive fire in the same district to suggest, however faintly, the storm of fire which swept over these hapless islands last week.

WE read the other day that Mr. Quiller Couch is at work on a long novel, urged thereto partly by his friends who think he has given himself rather disadvantageously to short stories of late years. Be this as it may, we notice that Mr. Frank Norris is suggesting in the *New York Critic* that somewhat similar considerations may bring about the decline of the American short story. He bases this prospect on the fact that publishers do not care for short stories, however keen editors may be to obtain them. The result is that the short story lives and dies in the place of its engendering—a weekly paper, or a monthly magazine. It is true that very tempting prices are paid to the best short story writers. But, as Mr. Norris argues, authors are queer cattle. They want reputation as well as money. "Books give them this—not fugitive short stories, published here and there, and at irregular intervals. Reputations that have been made by short stories published in periodicals may be counted upon the fingers of one hand. The 'life of a novel'—to use a trade term—is to a certain extent indeterminable. The life of a short story, be it never so excellent, is prolonged only till the next issue of the periodical in which it has appeared. If the periodical is a weekly it will last a week, if a monthly, a month,—and not a day more. If very good, it will create a demand for another short story by the same author, but that one particular contribution, the original one, is irretrievably and hopelessly dead." Thus is the long arm of the market stretched over the author's desk. The publisher guides the author's pen.

NEVERTHELESS Mr. Norris looks with no unquiet eye on the literary deluge. He excuses it in very much the same enlightened terms which Mr. Edward Garnett applied to it in the *Monthly Review* some considerable time ago. It is just the clamour of the multitude, he thinks—and here he must be right—that will call forth the Great Writer. "The demand which he is to supply comes from the Plain People—from the masses, and not from the classes. There is more significance as to the ultimate excellence of American letters in the sight of the messenger-boy devouring his 'Old Sleuths,' and 'Deadwood Dicks,' and 'Boy Detectives,' with an earnest, serious absorption, than in the spectacle of a 'reading circle' of dilettanti coquetting with Verlaine, and pretending that they understand." That the people are reading voraciously seems to Mr. Norris the main point, and he prophesies that later on it will not be necessary to bar fiction not three years old from the libraries, for then people will be demanding something better than current slip-slop; the standard will have been raised.

IN November last the publishers of *Good Words* announced that they would give £75 in cash prizes for the three best Coronation Odes submitted to them before a given date. All the odes which can be accepted under the rules of the competition are now in hand. The count

shows that the number of individual competitions received is 1,047. Hardly any part of the British Empire, even down to the smallest island in the most remote seas, is unrepresented. Dividing them by continents, including in each case the adjacent islands, the distribution is as follows:—Europe, 650; Asia, 40; Africa, 17; America, 156; Australasia, 182. There are some curiosities in this list. What is it in the atmosphere of the Leeward Isles that has produced 24 poets, while the Windward Isles can only boast two? Why should Victoria send 59 compositions, New South Wales only 20, South Australia 14, Queensland five, and West Australia two? The Australian Commonwealth as a whole furnishes just an even 100 competitors, thereby leading Canada's total of 91 by nine points, and still leading by one point if Newfoundland be added to the Dominion proper. South Africa is too much concerned with other matters to give the time to writing odes even to the King, and in the 17 odes received the nearest point to the fighting line represented is De Aar.

Now that Chateaubriand's *Memoires d'Outre Tombe* are before English readers, it is interesting to remember that this great writer, unlike Byron, to whom he perhaps gave much, rests in a tomb which in some degree answers to his career, and inspires the pilgrim. It is placed on a small island facing the west in the bay at St. Malo. Flaubert, in his *Par les Champs et par les Grèves*, describes this resting-place of genius in impassioned language which Mr. J. C. Tarver has translated as follows: "There he will sleep, his head turned to the west, in the tomb built on a cliff, his immortality will be like his life, deserted of all and surrounded by storms. The waves with the centuries will long murmur round this great monument; they will spring to his feet in the tempests, or in the summer mornings, when the white sails are spread and the swallow comes from beyond the seas, long and gentle, they will bring him the voluptuous melancholy of distances, and the caress of the open air. And the days thus slipping by, while the billows of his native beach shall be for ever singing between his birthplace and his tomb, the heart of René, cold at last, will slowly crumble into nothingness to the endless rhythm of that eternal music." There is a curiously Ruskinian quality about this passage.

APROPPOS of authors' graves, no greater contrast could be presented to Chateaubriand's stately resting-place than the nameless and unknown grave of Tom Paine, of whose first grave at New Rochelle the *New York Tribune* gives some interesting particulars and drawings. The body of Paine was lifted from this grave by William Cobbett and brought to England with the desire that it might find a resting-place in, of all places, Westminster Abbey. The subsequent adventures of the corpse would make a grim story could they be unravelled. It is said that a remote English churchyard received the remains; another story places the final burial in France. Cobbett meant well, but his proceedings were very indiscreet and they brought upon him Byron's epigram:—

In digging up your bones, Tom Paine,
Will Cobbett has done well;
You visit him on earth again;
He'll visit you in Hell.

It is said that the original burial-place is now believed to be haunted by Paine's ghost, and that not very long ago a young man was terrified to hear a voice exclaiming three times, "Where is my grave? I have lost my grave." It is whispered that the ghost of Paine haunts the spot, seeking rest.

MR. RAVEN HILL will issue on the 26th a volume of humorous drawings dealing with the lighter side of Volunteering. Mr. Raven Hill, who is himself an enthusiastic

Volunteer, takes a Kipling line as the motto of his book: "An' you're sent to pennyfights an' Aldershot it." Mr. Raven Hill is treading in the great footsteps of Charles Keene, whose style, more than any other, his own resembles. It is, of course, inevitable that Mr. Raven Hill's jokes should also, in some degree, recall Charles Keene's—a circumstance not in any way to be regretted. Thus in *Our Battalion* he has this:—

Colonel (to recruit who has forgotten to salute him): "What Company do you belong to?"

Recruit (mindful of his civil occupation): "Th—Th—The Gas Company, please, Sir!"

which recalls a rather more elaborate joke of Keene's:—

Captain Wilkinson (excitedly to Major Walker, of the Firm of Wilkinson, Walker & Co., Auctioneers and Estate Agents): "Don't you think we'd better bring our right wing round to attack the enemy's flank, so as to prevent their occupying those empty houses we have to let in Barker's Lane?"

COLLEGE and school journalism embody themselves in two modest, well-constructed magazines which lie on our table. *The Oxford Point of View* is a magazine of about the same size as the *Cornhill* in a cover slightly recalling the *Monthly Review*. It is to be published twice in each Term, and the price is a shilling net. We are afraid that the first number rather falls between the stools of brilliance and solidity. We have papers on Rossetti's "House of Life," the Decay of the Art of Acting, the New Cathedral at Westminster, &c., &c. Mr. Robert Bridges' article of candid inquiry as to the proper pronunciation of Latin is luminous and arresting. The Editor pleasantly evokes the probable impression of Democritus during ten minutes in the High. "Then the scholar, his brow lined, his conversation tainted with the philosophy of a pair of years; the sporting man, whose reputation would be gone if he wore both cap and gown at once; the would-be rake, whose mortar-board has been grimly mutilated in the privacy of his rooms; the rival sets of muscle and mind, always at loggerheads, yet devoured with mutual envy,—no, Democritus could not have borne it, after all!"

THE other magazine is *Bootham*, of which two issues a year at a subscription of five shillings are promised. *Bootham* emanates from the well-known and almost ancient Quaker school of that name in York—the school which helped to sow the seeds of oratory and uprightness in John Bright. The first number is devoted largely to certain recent inaugural "proceedings," and is admittedly not typical. But in its cover design and style of printing the magazine already leaves nothing to be desired, and the frontispiece reproduction, in colour, of Mr. Strange's water-colour view of York Minster, rising above the Bootham trees and the roofs of Gillygate, is excellent.

A CORRESPONDENT sends us the following companion piece to Bret Harte's poem, "The Stranger's Story" ("I was with Grant"), mentioned in our article on that writer last week. The author is Charles Henry Webb, and it was printed in *The Century* some years ago:—

RECOLLECTIONS OF GRANT.

"I knew him well," the old man said.

"We were together in fight:

I with the Left when the charge was led—

The General of course had the Right.

"I stood by his side," the old man said,

"When a bullet whizzed down the line:

Scarce forty feet from the General's head—

And but little farther from mine.

"Did I blench at the storm?" the old man said,

"Ah, sir, the bravest may;

And from childhood up I've been always afraid

Of finding myself in the way."

"Shall I write thee down, O hero," I said,
"As a friend of the fallen chief,
And blazon thy name beside that of the dead
In a glorious alto-relief?"

"Nay, his friends were many," the old man said,
"A greater distinction I want—

Just say I'm the one who when all was done
Wrote no 'Recollections of Grant!'"

AN American contemporary takes us mildly to task for suggesting that a recent attack on Matthew Arnold's criticism would probably call forth a rejoinder. It would not deign rejoinders to such iconoclasm. Nevertheless, there comes simultaneously another moderating estimate, American this time, of Arnold's position as a teacher and critic. The writer has much to say, and he says it brightly, against Arnold's treatment of America. He concludes that sheer nimbleness of faculty rather than weight and power of thought have placed Arnold and Renan where they stand on our shelves, and he ends with this jibe: "Nor shall we hesitate to concede to him, and to the illustrious French humorist who was his contemporary, a constructive gaiety of heart, for they have left us a new Lord's Prayer, instinct with a vivacious negation, and it begins thus: 'Our Father which art unknowable, paraphrased be Thy name.'"

THE handwriting of women is the nursery of graphology. It was Miss Ethel Colburn Mayne (not Wayne) whom we had the pleasure to laureate last week for her verses, "May Day at Sea." Moreover, Miss Mayne had modestly given a temporary address in Edinburgh; doubtless thinking, as an Irishwoman, that the modern Athens was a good enough place to fail in. Now that success has unexpectedly rewarded her effort, she is not, we believe, averse to our linking her name with her home at Blackrock, Cork, Ireland. If it were only to nip "another injustice" in the bud we would gladly do this. Lastly, Miss Mayne wrote, "But sleek waves, rolled in oily fray." We read "spray." Of course "fray" is the better word. Oh, blame not the bard!

The Hound of the Baskervilles is thus advertised by its New York publishers, Messrs. MacLure, Phillips, & Co.:—

Observe the Messenger Boy, how he Runs.

Is not this Unusual?

It is Positively Abnormal.

And its Cause?

He Goes on a Hurry Call for a Man—

To Fetch a Doctor?

—to Fetch a Book.

What Book?

The Hound of the Baskervilles.

How Surprised and Gratified the Man will be to Get his Book so Soon.

He will Not.

Why so?

The Messenger Boy has Heard of that Book.

Well?

He will Dip into It.

Yes?

And See the Name of Sherlock Holmes.

And then?

He will Seat him on a Mossy Curb. And he will Read. And Read. And Read.

But the Man. What of Him?

He will Tear his Hair and Cuss.

It that All?

No. Presently he will Rake up Another \$1.25 and will Hustle to the Bookstore himself.

Wise Man!

Happy Messenger Boy!

A LITTLE book called *To Whom Shall We Go?* an examination of some difficulties presented by unbelief, written by the Rev. Charles T. Ovenden, has this dedication:—

TO AN HONEST CRITIC
WHOM LOVE HAS NOT BLINDED.

A CORRESPONDENT writes: "The other day I came across a curious instance of perverted pity in the mind of a child. She was studying with interest an engraving of the well-known picture which has for subject the Coliseum by night after a massacre of Christians by wild beasts. The artist has chosen to depict the moment when, the show being over and the victims, it is to be hoped, dead, the animals are enjoying the hideous reward of their victory. One of them, for some unknown reason, has been compelled to forego his share in the horrible feast, and his dinnerless condition was the thing, and the only thing, that appealed to the child's sympathies. 'Oh, look at that poor lion over there,' was her remark, 'he hasn't got any!' I should be interested to know whether others among your readers have come across similar instances of misplaced sympathy." Perhaps some reader can cap this.

THE death of Mr. Paul Leicester Ford, the American novelist, who was shot dead at the end of last week by his brother in New York, is such an event as has not for many years shocked the literary world. The brother, whose feeling of revenge arose out of his disinheritance by his father and the needs brought on him by his own extravagance, committed suicide. Mr. Paul Leicester Ford's novels enjoyed a vast circulation.

Bibliographical.

IN the book world it never rains but it pours. A few years ago Mr. Frederick Wedmore and his daughter gave us a little volume consisting of selected *Poems of the Love and Pride of England*. It might have been more comprehensive with advantage, but it was prettily produced and altogether pleasing. Last year there came a collection, much more elaborate but less dainty, called *Patriotic Song, being an Anthology of the Patriotic Poetry of the British Empire from the Defeat of the Spanish Armada till the Death of Queen Victoria*. One would have thought that this work, though too kindly to the poetasters, might be said to cover the ground; but I see we are to have yet another anthology of the sort, to be called *Songs of England's Glory*. In this, I venture to hope, some critical discrimination will be shown. One has no right to take up an old subject unless one can "go one [or more] better" than one's predecessors. Personally, I think the rhythmical celebration of "England's Glory" can be over-done.

Mr. Havelock Ellis writes to me:—"I notice that in the current ACADEMY you wonder why Dryden found no place in the 'Mermaid' series. As a matter of fact, I not only arranged with Dr. Garnett for a volume of Dryden's plays, but the edition was ready for the printer, and the introduction written, when the editorship of the series passed out of my hands. No doubt Dr. Garnett would still be willing to arrange for the publication of the volume if a publisher can be found." That is a consummation devoutly to be wished, and I hope I may have done something towards hastening it. Here, most certainly, is the case of a book really wanted.

Another "felt want" is about to be supplied. Mr. A. F. Davidson is to present us with a biography of the elder Dumas which we all hope will be adequate. Some

of us have on our shelves the memoir of Dumas, in two volumes, produced by Mr. Percy Fitzgerald, whose method and whose style have, unhappily, none of the neatness and exactness which biography demands. Mr. Fitzgerald had his eye, perhaps, rather on the circulating libraries than on the careful students of literature. Mr. Davidson, it will be remembered, brought out, ten or eleven years ago, a translation of Dumas' *Memoirs*, curtailed. A really serviceable account of Alexander the Great is undoubtedly a "desideratum."

It is not for me to say whether Sir D. Mackenzie Wallace was or was not the proper person to reply for Literature at the Royal Academy banquet. We must, however, be just, and it is incontestable that Sir D. M. Wallace is, at any rate, an author. He produced some years ago a book about Russia, of which a cheap edition appeared in 1888; and he has brought out a volume on *Egypt and the Egyptian Question* (1883). He is further announced as editor-in-chief of the new supplement to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. He cannot, therefore, be treated as an unknown man, and to that extent our young friend "Max" may be twitted with a lack of information.

The late Mr. Paul Leicester Ford seems to have been introduced to the English reading public in December 1894, when his tale *The Honourable Peter Sterling* came into circulation in this country. (It was re-issued here, with Messrs. Hutchinson's imprint, in 1898.) In 1897 came *The True George Washington* (Lippincott), *The Great K. and A. Train Robbery* (Low), and *The Story of an Untold Love*, afterwards taken up by Messrs. Constable. In 1899 Messrs. Constable brought out Mr. Ford's *Tattle-Tales of Cupid* and his *Janice Meredith, a Story of the American Revolution*; his *Many-Sided Franklin* was also circulated over here in the same year. Finally, there comes in 1900 his *Wanted, a Matchmaker: a Christmas Story*.

A book called *Rudyard Kipling: an Attempt at Appreciation* came out in May 1899. It was then described on the title page as by "G. F. Monkshood (W. J. Clarke)." I have just seen a copy of a new edition (the third), on whose title-page the book is described as by "G. F. Monkshood and George Gamble." From the bibliographical point of view this is a little confusing. The new edition also rejoices in two tables of contents, of which that at the back of the dedication-page is the correct one. The author (or authors) has (or have) introduced some sixty pages of "addenda," dealing with the Kipling edition *de luxe* and with the more recent of his publications (*Stalky & Co.*, *From Sea to Sea*, *Kim*).

The managers of the Putney Free Library were fortunate in being able to secure for their bazaar and exhibition the aid of their distinguished neighbours, Mr. Swinburne and Mr. Watts-Dunton, both of whom autographed several copies of their works. The prices obtained, looking at the remoteness of the sale from the metropolitan centre, were distinctly high. A copy of *Tristram of Lyonesse* brought in three guineas. One of *The Coming of Love*, published at five shillings net, realised twenty shillings; copies of the cheap edition of *Aylwin* sold at eleven shillings, and so on. In due time, of course, the monetary value of these autographed books will be considerably enhanced.

A little bird tells me that that very successful political skit called *Clara in Blunderland* is the work of two well-known journalists—Mr. M. H. Temple (one of our numerous literary barristers) and Mr. Harold Begbie (whose share in the book was confined, I believe, to contributing most of the verses). Not only has *Clara in Blunderland* had a very large sale in England; I hear it is being translated into French for the Continental market.

THE BOOKWORM.

Reviews.

Kapellmeister Wagner.

Life of Richard Wagner. By Wm. Ashton Ellis. Being the Authorised English Version of C. F. Glasenapp's "Das Leben Richard Wagner's." Vol. II. (Kegan Paul. 16s. net.)

It will be remembered by readers of the first volume (which we reviewed on its appearance) that Mr. Ashton Ellis's authorised version of Dr. Glasenapp's great German *Life of Wagner* is very free indeed in its handling. Where Mr. Ellis translates, his version is close; but he takes the liberty of rewriting and even expanding where he deems it advisable. The result is that his design of following Dr. Glasenapp volume for volume has come to grief. The additional matter introduced by him has obliged him to terminate this second volume at a somewhat earlier period of Wagner's career than that covered by the second volume of the German life; and he makes no further promise of accurate future conformity with the Teuton author's volume arrangement. The present instalment of the English version ends with Wagner's flight from Dresden; and therefore coincides with the Master's career as Dresden Kapellmeister. It is becoming very evident that this otherwise admirable *Life* has the Boswellian disease in an acute form. Wagner is exhibited as little less than perfect: in all his disputes and conduct he is right, his adversaries wrong; nor is it admitted (with the rarest exceptions) that hostile comments can have even a basis of truth. An enemy's sketch, however malignant or even distorted, has a trick of hitting upon real weaknesses: hatred sharpens the sight for the loose joints in a man's armour. A wise man will note such indications, with needed deductions and allowances, rather than thrust them away as altogether false, because jealous or spiteful. But this neither the German nor the English author is minded to do.

The first volume ended with the triumph of "Rienzi" and the partial success of the "Flying Dutchman" at the Dresden Court Theatre, and with the good ship Wagner at last in haven of the Dresden Chapelmastership. The present (second) volume is altogether concerned with Wagner's career as Kapellmeister at Dresden. It shows how the haven proved a stormy one, so that the ship Wagner gradually dragged its anchor, and after many collisions parted cable altogether, drifting once more out to sea. In plain words, it is the record of a perpetually increasing struggle with the authorities, his colleagues, and outside enemies; till at last the musical rebel became a political revolutionary, and fled from Dresden blackened with the smoke of the barricades.

An angel with Wagner's aims could scarce have made good the Dresden position; and Wagner's energies were much more demonic than angelical. The Intendant of the Court Theatre, his official superior, was an ex-superintendent of Forests; appointed to his position because he understood hunting, and knew how to wind a horn, he seemed a fit director of music. Narrow, rigid, conservative, only the King's favour for Wagner preserved any *modus vivendi* between him and this Von Lüttichau, framed for the misunderstanding and antagonism which gradually exasperated their relations. Then, though Wagner was the actual ruling and responsible musician, formally he was only Second Kapellmeister. The post of First was held by his predecessor at the head of the Court Theatre, Reissiger, a capable mediocrity, without initiative and wedded to tradition—a man, therefore, after Von Lüttichau's own heart—who must have wondered why the King should send him this pestilent oversetter of the old order (which he saw not any necessity should yield place to new) instead of letting well—and Reissiger—alone. Reissiger, despite Wagner's efforts, soon became jealous of him; and his position as nominal head, with its technical

rights, supported and encouraged by an Intendant who shared his dislike of the new broom, enabled him easily to make things bitter for his young coadjutor. In the band itself there soon arose an hostility towards the innovating Conductor, led by the first violin, Lipinski, a Polish *virtuoso* of real eminence. Life and individuality were inspired into them despite themselves: Wagner dragged them forwards like a sulky dog, hanging back and showing its teeth at every step. When he had at last gone, and they were given a Conductor after the dear old pattern, these same men divinised his traditions, and clung to his special innovations of *tempo* and the like in direct revolt against the new Leader's *baton*. Such is the common clay of man: and Wagner might have said with Coriolanus:—

I shall be loved when I am lacked.

Among the operatic staff he had his compensations, in two great artists, Tichatschek and Schröder-Devrient. Tichatschek, greatest tenor in Germany, loved him and worked for his operas with ceaseless devotion. The Schröder-Devrient was not only his friend, not only the unrivalled creatress of his operatic heroines, but a source of artistic inspiration to him. Married unhappily, she threw herself away upon a worthless Saxon officer, who lived on her starring engagements. Wagner describes her with enthusiasm:—

Upon the boards the character she represented, and that alone, in private life she was entirely herself. The possibility of pretending to a thing she was not lay so unimaginably remote from her, that its very absence stamped her with that gentility for which Nature had so remarkably predestined her. In dignity and ease of carriage she might have been the model for a queen. Her lightly won, but dearly tended education often shamed the *beaux esprits* of various nations who came to pay her homage; she would playfully introduce them to each other in their respective tongues, thereby plunging them at times into an embarrassment from which she alone could extricate them. Through her wit she could cloak her culture in the presence of uncultured sirs, for instance our Court-theatre intendants; but she gave that wit free vein among her equals, as which she gladly looked upon her colleagues of the theatre, without a touch of pride.

With men, however, who threw themselves at her feet, no matter how high their rank, she was (says another observer) capricious and tyrannical in the most regal way. Though she worked her hardest for Wagner, and was sincerely his friend, even his admirer, she hardly understood his music. "You are a genius, but you write us such queer stuff. One can scarcely sing it," she said after "Tannhäuser." For, with all the incessant burthens and conflict of his office, this was a season of creative energy with Wagner. Besides minor productions, this indomitable fighter found time to revolutionise the German musical drama with "Tannhäuser" and "Lohengrin." To the eternal disgrace of Lüttichau, "Lohengrin" was refused a hearing on Wagner's own stage at Dresden. It was the punishment for the part he was then beginning to take in revolutionary politics. "Tannhäuser" came during the early and comparatively Saturnian days of his office, and got its audience. The first performance was very like a Pyrrhic victory; Tichatschek was dramatically incapable of much of his passionate music, necessitating cut upon cut in after-performances, which were cuts to Wagner's heart; the Schröder-Devrient was afraid to act her part—lest it should be identified with the irregularity of her private life (in regard to the Saxon officer, presumably). Much of the music was an overwhelming surprise to German *connoisseurs*. Wagner despaired; and the second performance found a cold, half-empty house. But the singers had improved, the opera gradually woke up the audience; the third performance brought a good house, and at the fourth the theatre was packed. "Tannhäuser" triumphed—

in Dresden. Not so elsewhere. His operas—"Rienzi," the "Dutchman," and this—slowly found their way through Germany, but with varying fortunes. They were already so many war-cries, and the big battalions were against him. The fine old Spohr, at Cassel, alone among the Masters upheld the new-comer's banner. The rest were not with him, or against him.

It was the beginning (for like of stubbornness, if not duration) of a musical Thirty Years' War, which rent Germany into two camps. On each side was a leader. On the one stood solitary (but for a few private friends) Wagner, as Frau Wille has described him at this date:—

Wagner's image stamped itself upon my memory; the slender mobile figure, the head with its breadth of brow, its piercing eyes and lines of energy around the small closed mouth. A painter, who sat beside me, drew my attention to the square projecting chin, as if chiselled of marble, which gave the face a quite peculiar character. [Wagner] was of great vivacity, self-conscious, but winningly natural.

On the other side, about him a brilliant staff of German Masters, stood Mendelssohn. He raised no voice, lifted no pen, was not seen himself in the battle. But his views were known, and his silent disdain became vocal through an innumerable host of relentless critics, Mendelssohnian to a man. Among critics and musicians alike, he was an uncrowned king, and his school was ascendant throughout Europe. England had but one voice of acclamation for him. If you would catch the echoes of that war, take up (if it be still in print) a novel which was on the railway bookstalls even in the late 'seventies—*Charles Ancester*, by the author of *My First Violin*. A musical novel, full of enthusiasm, a certain ability, and something like modern preciosity, its enthusiasms seem to belong to a vanished world. There you hear the full din of battle; while set over against each other are the godlike Mendelssohn and the wicked Wagner. For Milans-André is seemingly a composite figure—Disraeli-fashion—mingled of Wagner and Liszt. A brilliantly vicious pianist (as good Mendelssohniens regarded Liszt), he is also a composer of wicked operas which take people off their feet (for which, you are rather given to understand, he will be damned when the trumpets prelude to the Last Judgment). This representative of all that is musically sinful is antagonised by the virtuous, the saintly Mendelssohn the All-Right, who moves through the book amidst swinging of censers, and dies to slow music (a transparency of angels more than hinted at). It is wonderful; and the wonder is, that people really felt like that in those days.

"In familiar intercourse Mendelssohn was charming; but in more general company it was astonishing with what vanity he strove to centre all attention on himself," says an admirer of Mendelssohn, J. Nordmann. He himself desired to compose an opera; and it is quite possible he was jealous of Wagner, as Wagner believed. But the fundamental reason was, that Mendelssohn honestly thought the new school pernicious, because it broke from the classical tradition. Because he was classically virtuous, there were to be no more cakes and ale. Wagner, on the contrary, did full justice to Mendelssohn, and in that showed himself the greater.

Mendelssohn died early; but his guerilla-bands—of musicians and critics—throughout Europe continued the war to the bitter end. To criticisms Wagner replied with masterpieces; nor did his own pen sleep. But the unequal conflict really turned in his favour when Liszt produced "*Tannhäuser*" at Weimar, and a Dual Alliance of genius faced hostile Europe—the Goethe and Schiller of music. Then first Wagner knew Liszt for his friend. But that comes at the close of this volume, which leaves Wagner in the darkest hour of defeat. Von Lüttichau had come to treat him like a lackey who did not know his work. His projects for reform of the Court Theatre were kicked aside, and he was plainly told he had better go.

The Revolution reached Dresden *via* Vienna; and the road to theatrical reform (he thought) lay over the barricades. He mounted them: and when he kept his tryst (beforehand made) with Liszt at Weimar, it was in flight from the Prussian bayonets which had pricked rebellion out of Dresden. That was the end of Kapellmeister Wagner, and the beginning of the thorny way to Bayreuth.

A Pocket Elia.

Elia and the Last Essays of Elia. By Charles Lamb. With Introduction and Notes by E. V. Lucas. (The Little Library: Methuen. 1s. 6d. net.)

"A CAREFUL observer of life, Bernard, has no need to invent." Thus Lamb replied to some gentle stricture of Bernard Barton's on his essay called "Modern Gallantry," adding, "Why, that Joseph Paice was as real a person as Joseph Hume, and a great deal pleasanter." Joseph Paice, the reader will remember, was the admirable merchant of Bread Street Hill and director of the South-Sea Company who in his reverence for womanhood in every form would shelter a market-woman under his umbrella with as much carefulness as if she had been a Countess. He was as real as Joseph Hume. In this edition of the *Essays* we have a running Key to such portraits, many of which call for more elucidation than that of Joseph Paice. Even here Mr. Lucas adds to common information by recalling the fact that this very fine gentleman was engaged in a sonnet by his uncle Thomas Edwards, the author of *Canons of Criticism*, to marry and continue the family line. The sonnet failed of its aim, and the race of out and out Sir Calidores is still thin, scattered, and fortuitous.

To all the *Essays* Mr. Lucas has written little prefatory notes which strike us as admirable in their neatness and sufficiency of statement. The result is an edition of *Elia* which you must have on your shelves no matter what other editions are there already. It is *Elia* and an *Elia* *Who's Who* in a pocket volume.

At first we were inclined to demur to the elevation of each introductory note into such a Grace before Meat as Lamb himself might deprecate, and to have suggested a mobilisation at the end of the volume. But the thought has died away. Not so our conviction that Lamb's *Essays* in a bright scarlet cover are miscllothed. This colour follows the "series," but as the volume appears to differ from its fellows in being thicker than any one of them it might have differed also in discarding this un-*Elia* blaze for some solitary tint on that hither side of Quaker drab where Lamb dallied alike in dress and opinion. There was no red in Lamb's life, to speak of; and his thought seems curiously oppressed by the colour even when the book is open and it is but a red rim of contradiction. Perhaps, even now, the publishers may deign another reference to the spectrum.

One result of these interesting notes is to confirm, almost unfailingly, Lamb's assurances to readers so timid in lying as Bernard Barton. Yet in the Key to the *Essays* which he himself supplied to a friend he admits one or two glib evocations from nothing more substantial than his imagination. In the "Complaint of the Decay of Beggars," the overseers of St. L. (by a printer's slip it is "St. S." in the note) and "the mild rector of ——" are inventions. No original has been found for Mrs. Conrady. Once indeed—in his first essay, the South-Sea House—Lamb is so faithful to names that, fearful lest he has gone too far, he hedges at the end. "Peradventure, the very names, which I have summoned up before thee, are fantastic." But they are all in the records of the South-Sea House. In "The Old Benchers" all the names are real save that of Lovel. "I knew this Lovel. He was a man of an incorrigible and losing honesty." Lovel was his father.

Who was Captain Jackson, that immortal make-believer and lean treasurer of the small-change of enthusiasm? Research, it seems, has been baffled. The annals of Westbourne Green do not disclose the Captain's cottage, nor can his boast that Glover wrote his *Leonidas* in one of its rooms be even distantly confirmed. Yet, with Mr. Lucas, we are as persuaded that the Captain lived as that F., "the most gentlemanly of oilmen," had his shop at the Holborn corner of Featherstone Buildings, and was Francis Fielde, Lamb's godfather. Oddly enough there is nothing to support Lamb's statement that it was to this house that Sheridan brought his eloping bride from Bath. It may as well be true as not, is the editor's comment.

An august obscurity surrounds the identity of Mrs. Battle. In a letter from Lamb to Ayrton, one of his whist-playing friends, Mr. Lucas finds a strong hint that Mrs. Battle was Mrs. Burney, Sarah Burney, wife of Admiral Burney, who wrote an *Essay on the Game of Whist* in 1821. But this is at least at variance with Lamb's "Old Sarah Battle (now with God)" written in February of the same year. Lamb's adaptations of fact are often of a kind very difficult to unravel, and dove-tailing is often quite impossible. Concerning another of his more famous portraits there is no doubt. Ralph Bigod, whose borrowing was more heart-warming than other men's lending, was John Fenwick, editor of the *Albion*.

Time has ante-dated the veracity of one of Lamb's most beautiful sentences, that in which he describes the Quakers coming up to their Whitsun conferences and whitening the easterly streets of the metropolis "like troops of the Shining Ones." The white and dove-coloured shawls and bonnets which gave to this description its fanciful truth have indeed disappeared; but as a matter of mere fact Mr. Lucas goes too far when he says of the Friends at their Yearly Meeting in Bishopsgate that "all distinctive garb has now (1901) vanished." He would not seek it quite in vain in this Whitsun of 1902.

Assuredly Lamb's was a Muse of reality, domesticity, and neighbourhood. He brought the finest human feeling and the most actual sort of culture to the men and things he knew, and he wrote of these with the ease and inimitableness of a method which was separated from the man himself by no bridge of ambition or wrong self-consciousness, however short. Lamb and his essays are one, and when we turn over his pages—as, alas! we should not have found time to do but for this duty—we are filled again with feelings which perhaps only Lamb, among all English writers, can inspire. We will not attempt to utter them. But if the reader who has long neglected his Elia (treating him as a "standard author") will read such pages as those on James William Dodd, in "The Old Actors"—beginning with the sentence, "Few now remember Dodd," and ending with, "Dying, he 'put on the weeds of Dominic'"—we promise him that if he ever loved Elia, all his allegiance will rise again in a heart that knew not how it thirsted for such delectable water.

A New Tragedy.

Kiartan the Icelander. A Tragedy. By Newman Howard. (Dent. 4s. 6d. net.)

HAD not Mr. Howard's play been singled out for exceptional praise, and better than praise, in other quarters, we do not feel sure that we should have distinguished it from the ruck of blank verse tragedies. It is not without merits, certainly; but there is an annual crop of such plays, which share amongst them all the merits, save indeed the crowning merit of being alive. Nor are we convinced that "Kiartan the Icelander" has much more vitality than that of a well-constructed Academy picture. Strictly speaking, the drama is hardly to be defined as a tragedy, for its issue is the triumph of good rather than of

evil. Mr. Howard states it for us himself in a verse of his epilogue:—

Deep from the fount of things it welled amain,—
That light which Galilee on Iceland shed,—
That god of Love which slew their gods malign,
When vengeance died of pity, and Kiartan said:
"Brother, by your hand liefer were I slain
Than bid you die by mine."

The scene is set at the time of the conversion of Iceland to Christianity in the tenth century, and the vengeance which Kiartan waived was over his foster-brother Bolli, who had lent himself to a priestly intrigue, and taken Gudrun, the bride who should have been Kiartan's. The strength of the play lies in its structure. The interest of the plot is ingeniously complicated and brought to a climax in the fifth act, and the play of character in the two principal personages, Kiartan and Gudrun, is well managed. On the other hand, hardly sufficient pains have been bestowed in making the action of Bolli convincing. Moreover, the "Christianity" motive is not well worked into the web. It is not made evident that Kiartan's self-sacrifice proceeds from "the light which Galilee on Iceland shed." In fact, after reading the epilogue, we had to turn back and satisfy ourselves that Kiartan was supposed to have been converted. And if Mr. Howard designed to depict the triumph of the religion of love, there is a dramatic inconsistency in making so much of the action depend on a piece of treachery in which the Christian missionaries were largely concerned. Surely self-sacrifice is not an exclusively Christian virtue, and the dramatic issues would have been simpler and more effective if the conversion had been left out altogether. However, Mr. Howard's plot and characterization are better than his handling. He suffers from several distinct obsessions, all of which militate against the success of his play. One is an elaborate and painful archæology which opposes an impenetrable barrier to the reader who is not an Icelandic scholar. Another is colloquialism. How does the tragic dignity consort with such as metaphor as—

When Master Bolli visits us at Langar
He gobbles Gudrun with his eyes;

and instances of a similar failure of literary sense, due of course ultimately to want of humour, are far too frequent. But most fatal of all in its results is the traditional belief that to be "literary" a play must be written from cover to cover in blank verse. Now the structure of blank verse is based upon periods, and needs, therefore, to bring out its quality, long stretches of continuous verse. It is wholly inapplicable to scenes, such as Mr. Howard uses in large number, which are filled with the rapid and broken dialogue of a dozen different speakers. The only way to avoid catastrophe would have been to put these into prose and to keep the blank verse for passages where the conditions could be observed.

Mr. Howard's errors of judgment are the more regrettable in that he is evidently not without a sense of style. Here is the closing lament of the Skald Liot over the body of Kiartan:—

But as for him—these eyes have seen of old
Stars flocking in the sky by some Great Hand
Shepherded to their wattles in the west:
But now upon my noonday darkness beam
Lights more divine and mightier majesties:
Nor till the stars are blown out in the night
Shall any breath extinguish such a soul.
But you whose eyes still gaze upon our isle,
Lonely amid the foam of far-off seas,
Behold his fame aflame upon the clouds,
His pyre aglow upon the eternal hills!
The aurora is his watch tower in the sky;
Iceland shall be God's acre for his bones;
And for his dirge and monument, behold
Her wild sea nesses and her windy walls
And hollow caverns washed with thundering waves,

We venture to think that these lines, and especially the fine image with which they open, reach a very high level of poetic "ecstasy." But it must be added that it is one only rarely attained in the play.

An Amiable Observer.

A Foreign View of England in the Reigns of George I. and George II.: The Letters of Monsieur César de Saussure to his Family. Translated and edited by Madame Van Muyden. (Murray. 10s. 6d. net.)

M. DE SAUSSURE, we are told in the preface to this volume, was born in 1705, and was a descendant of a French family of that name, his ancestors having sought refuge at Lausanne from the Protestant persecutions during the reign of Louis XIV. In the spring of 1725 M. de Saussure left Lausanne for a tour which occupied eleven years. The letters in the volume before us date from May 1725 to December 1730. The first of the letters, therefore, was written in M. de Saussure's twentieth year; the last in his twenty-fifth. On the whole, the impressions which he records are astonishingly reasonable and quite delightfully naïve. There are not many men of M. de Saussure's years who, even in a letter-writing age, would have taken the trouble to diarise their journeyings with such minuteness. Yet we wish that M. de Saussure had had a touch of that manner which reached its flower in the letters of Horace Walpole. Care we have, and an undoubted effort after fairness, but hardly any illumination and no humour at all. The letters under review were read, we are told, by Voltaire, who returned them "with a card, on which was written in his own hand: 'Monsieur de Voltaire et Madame Denis offrent leurs obéissances à Monsieur et Madame de Saussure et renvoyent les manuscrits. On ne peut trop remercier Monsieur de Saussure de la bonté qu'il a eue de prêter un ouvrage si amusant et si utile.'" That is worth quoting, even though we may suppose M. de Voltaire to have been in his most complacent mood when he wrote it.

M. de Saussure appears to have rapidly found himself at home in London, although at first he could speak no English. On the Sunday following his arrival he is at Court and sees the King, "followed by the three young Princesses who reside with him in the Palace; they are the Prince of Wales's three eldest daughters." He is surprised to find that every one makes a reverence to the King. "The English," he says, "do not consider their King to be so very much above them that they dare not salute him, as in France; they respect him and are faithful to him, and often sincerely attached to him." Most things English seem good to this indefatigable letter-writer; "it is not possible," he says " . . . to have more comfortable houses," and he proceeds to describe one, even to the area railings. The squares and Covent Garden impress him greatly, also Lincoln's Inn, "where a quantity of young students, called by the name of 'Lawyers,' reside." Over St. Paul's M. de Saussure grows more than usually enthusiastic. "This edifice," he cries, "is the most truly magnificent of all London and England." He has the true passion for streets:—

The four streets—the Strand, Fleet Street, Cheapside, and Cornhill—are, I imagine, the finest in Europe. What help to make them interesting and attractive are the shops and the signs. Every house, or rather every shop, has a sign of copper, pewter, or wood-painted and gilt. Some of these signs are really magnificent, and have cost as much as one hundred pounds sterling. . . . Every house possesses one or two shops where the choicest merchandise from the four quarters of the globe is exposed to the sight of the passers-by. A stranger might spend whole days, without ever feeling bored, examining these wonderful goods.

M. de Saussure misses nothing which may properly be seen by a well-conducted young man, from the Lord

Mayor's Show to the execution of thirteen criminals in a batch. One of these was Jonathan Wild. "Many persons," he says, "consider that more harm was done than good by the execution of this famous thief, for there is now no one to go to who will help you to recover your stolen property." From London M. de Saussure turns to the environs—to Chelsea, "one of the finest and largest villages outside London"; Kensington, "a large and fine village"; Marylebone, "a fine large village"; the "market town" of Islington; and "a village with fine houses called Hackney." Of each M. de Saussure has something to say, and although the manner is rather that of a guide-book, he appears to have acquired much of the matter at first-hand. One is astonished at the quantity of material collected by this enterprising young gentleman; on one page he describes a piece of machinery, on the next rum and brandy punch; he threads his way through politics and religion and discourses of horse-racing and the prerogatives of peers. His characterisations, too, are sound in the main, though without much true insight. What may be seen with the eyes M. de Saussure sees with remarkable clearness.

He was present at the coronation of George II.: "I then saw the most solemn, magnificent, and sumptuous ceremony it is any one's lot in life to witness." He gives the order of the procession, and then drops into rapture again: "It is impossible for me to make you understand and imagine the pomp and magnificence of this solemn procession, which took more than two hours to pass before us." He is bewildered by the show of jewels; "the peeresses," he says, "were covered with them." When the great doors of Westminster Hall were thrown open after the banquet and the people rushed in, "the pillage was most diverting; the people threw themselves with extraordinary avidity on everything the hall contained; blows were given and returned, and I cannot give you any idea of the noise and confusion that reigned."

M. de Saussure's final opinion is that "England undoubtedly . . . is the most happily-governed country in the world," and he gives sound reasons for that opinion. But his opinion of English naval officers is not so flattering:—

During my stay at Portsmouth I learned to know English naval officers. Good Lord! What men! I found to my cost that the greater number were the most debauched, the most dissolute, and the most terrible swearers I had ever come across.

These over-robust seamen were the seamen of Smollett, and not unnaturally too boisterous for M. de Saussure of Lausanne. We take leave of M. de Saussure with considerable respect for his industry and observation. It should be added that the volume contains some interesting contemporary, or almost contemporary, prints, and a portrait of the author.

A Laughing Conscience.

The Cynic's Breviary: Maxims and Anecdotes from Nicolas de Chamfort. Selected and arranged by William G. Hutchison. (Elkin Mathews.)

DECADENCE is seldom, if ever, so dull as to be wholly unaware of the significance of its own attributes: that is what conspicuously distinguishes it from decivilisation. Decadent society is self-conscious with a consciousness that, while it capers and postures and nicknames God's creatures, still whispers, very like a conscience,—What zeds after all, you know, we essentially are! Such a small remembrancer in the days of the Dubarry and the innumerable anonymous of the Court of Louis XIV. was the curled and powdered little *abbé* with the assumed name and the ready tongue whose table talk has been filtered into these some fifty pages, as alone likely to interest an age which is well content to leave the five volumes of his deliberate literary endeavour to the worms. For it was as a writer that he aspired to be known, encouraged thereto

by the success of the sermons that, at a Louis a sermon, he composed for another's declamation. For his *Eloge de Molière* he gained a prize; in 1764 he successfully produced a comedy, *La Jeune Indienne*; and later a tragedy, besides many other things that do not matter. But it was as a talker—as this small remembrancer that even the most corrupt society is dissatisfied without—that even in his lifetime he was known. “La Rochefoucauld Chamfort” they called him in the clubs; and what he lacked of his prototype's breadth, serenity, restraint, and universality of penetration (it is Mr. Hutchison's remark, in his preface) he made up in passion, daring, and sincerity. His translator and editor goes so far even as to declare that “behind the aphorism we behold the man, a latter-day Ecclesiastes, who has visions at times of a Promised Land beyond the wilderness.” At any rate, in the latter days, when the mirage of courtly felicity had melted, Chamfort threw in his lot with the revolutionaries. But the Jacobins were less tolerant to a conscience than the courtiers. “Sois mon frère ou je vous tue” was his too-pointed expression of a principle that took itself in deadly earnest. He was haled before the tribunal, imprisoned, and being released was presently imprisoned again. Shortly, he was so harassed that with a pistol and a razor he mangled himself rather clumsily to death.

As you turn these fifty pages you discern what manner of society it was in which he lived and learned wisdom—such wisdom as he did learn. Here is a France in which seven million folk beg for alms and other twelve millions are too poor to give them; and in the midst of such a France, a city of gaieties and pleasures where four-fifths of the inhabitants die of grief. Here is a nobility that is by its own account intermediary between the King and the people—whose Conscience chuckles: “just as the hound is the intermediary between the huntsman and the hares.” “Be in love with all the women,” Madame de Montmorin advises her son about to go into society; and Conscience whispers: “Whatever evil a man may think of women there is no woman but thinks more.” “’Tis not generally known how much wit a man requires to avoid being ridiculous”; and even though you have the wit to be pleasing, “to know how to be bored is an art which gives far better results; indeed talent for making a fortune, like that for succeeding with women, can almost be reduced to that art.” The reason is simple: “Society would be a charming affair if we were only interested in one another.” Profound melancholy waits upon the pursuit of pleasure as a final cause: “Living is a disease from the pains of which sleep eases us every sixteen hours; sleep is but a palliative, death alone is the cure.” Meanwhile “The worst wasted of all days is that in which one has not laughed.”

And that laughter sounds the saddest note of all.

The “Middle” Man.

Recreations and Reflections. (Dent. 5s.)

THE *Saturday Review* has long supplied a synonym for truculence, and has generally lived up to its reputation. But in its fiercest days the sour leader and the acid review enclosed a middle which gave the necessary contrast of sweetness. Now here we have half a hundred of the “middles” which have recently appeared in the *Saturday* and are now elevated to the dignity of essays, being issued in a sturdy volume with an introduction by an editor who admits that he is, in his official capacity, a mere showman. We may remark that he, Mr. Harold Hodge, shows in this volume that he can play a part at a pinch. The “middle” is happily named, though probably the composing-room was its godfather. The political leader must be serious; it sets out the policy of the paper, and that is a tradition more important inside the office than to the reader outside. But the “middle” contains, as Mr. Hodge points out,

“our lighter thoughts, reflections upon all sorts of men and things, pleasant things and interesting men, and reflections of the easy happy kind that bind no one and the reflector least of all.” Indeed, though this particular journalistic vehicle got its name from its position in the paper, it might claim as its family motto “*Medio tutissimus ibis*,” which we will render: “in a ‘middle’ you may safely go as you please.”

But the editor's difficulty is to collect those casual talks of “pleasant things and interesting men” and eliminate those which are not of permanent import. What is of permanent import—if we take the standard of the club smoking-room and half a dozen intelligent men? That is the standard by which we must judge the “middle.” “The importance of good manners,” for example, has been the central subject for a “middle” since journalism crystallised, and Mr. Baumann has the last word. “Conversation” is a topic on which one may be general and caustic by turns, and more than one will follow the anonymous contributor of the *Saturday* essay. These are questions on which we all have something to say, and find our vehicle in the “go-as-you-please” column. But Mr. Cunninghame Graham misses the note of geniality—though not the note of interest—in his “Buta.” It is the account in dialogue of the “civilization” of a beautiful Syrian woman by *bonâ fide* Scottish clerks at the adjacent factory. There is always an undertone of savagery to Mr. Cunninghame Graham's humour which should take him from the “middle” to the outer sheets of the paper he favours. From Mr. Dewar's sketch of Queen Victoria's last journey—from Osborne to London—the element of permanence is lacking, and not even the successful reproduction of Carlyle's mannerisms should have induced an editor to give it reincarnation. If one were to select the model of a “middle,” in which some simple topic (not yet so handled and pawed as “conversation” or “manners”) is turned upside and downside, inside and outside, and made to reflect new lights with each turn, we should choose Mr. Stephen Gwynn's essay on “Quotability.” The central thesis—the germ in the writer's brain—is merely the allegation that an author may in the end be roughly judged by the number of quotations he supplies. But Mr. Gwynn leads a pretty dance to the conclusion. And that really is the art of the “middle,” to lead your readers from anywhere to anywhere, but to give them a good time on the way. For the reader's good time scenery, incident, comment are requisite. That may serve as a rough definition of what is demanded by the essay. The question remains whether half a hundred essays at a gulp can be swallowed and enjoyed.

Other New Books.

We are Seven: Half-hours on the Stage Grave and Gay.
By Hamilton Aidé. (Murray. 4s. net.)

THE seven one-act pieces which make up this volume with the curious title have appeared in the *Anglo-Saxon Review*, *The Nineteenth Century*, and elsewhere. And they have been played by Madame Sarah Bernhardt, Mrs. Kendal, Madame Modjeska, Mr. Forbes Robertson, and others. Therefore they must be received with the respect due to their unexceptionable references. Mr. Aidé has been writing for thirty years or more, and these plays, for any internal technical evidence to the contrary, might have been composed in 1872. The author's talent has not developed. It is what it was—mild, inoffensive, a little clever and ingenious, and quite sincere; but of the antique. “A Gleam of Darkness,” played by Madame Bernhardt, begins with a long and passionate soliloquy for the heroine, just as though Ibsen had never been born. And the heroine says things like this:—“How beautiful the morning is, and how it hurts me. There was a storm

last night, but the sky and sea have forgotten it." Doubtless Madame Bernhardt would enjoy the elocution of these poetical sentiments, but in the mouth of an English Mrs. Morton, they echo the Della Cruscan of other days. "A Lesson in Acting," in which Mrs. Kendal performed, is simple, less ambitious, and much better. It was probably written for Mrs. Kendal, and we can conceive that she would make her share of the play extremely effective. But though we never saw Modjeska and Mr. Forbes Robertson in "All or Nothing," we entirely refuse to believe that even these talented performers could disguise the clumsiness and old fashion of that artificiality. The piece is studded with soliloquies. Each character has his soliloquy. The husband drops an envelope and the wife picks it up. Then the wife tears up an unfinished note, and the husband picks that up; and so the action moves cheerfully along. Mr. Aidé may plead that the notorious scrap-of-paper dodge is still in vogue and permissible, since it was to be seen at large in Mr. Pinero's latest play "Iris." He may assert that, as a stage device, it will live for ever. Perhaps it will, in a particular sort of drama. On the whole, the book is not provocative of violent emotion. Its contents will probably appeal to amateur dramatic societies, who may take their choice of it at a guinea per play per night.

Between Ourselves: Some of the Little Problems of Life.
By Max O'Rell. (Chatto and Windus. 3s. 6d.)

MAX O'RELL is known; his name is a popular label. When, as in this book, he discourses on points of conduct and worldly wisdom from "Cheek" to "Why Mussulmans despise Christians" and from "The Man all Women Like" to "The Crisis in Matrimony" we know that we shall have a great deal of shrewd, humorous talk not fanatically keeping to the safe side of vulgarity. If such be the premonition, it is exactly fulfilled in these entertaining pages. The two persistent elements in the book are anecdote and maxim. At the end Max O'Rell finds that he has a lot of maxims over and these he prints under the head of "Cupidiana." They are of this kind:—

If a woman tells you that she loves you, that may mean nothing at all; but if she notices at once that you are wearing a cravat different from the one that you had on yesterday, or if, when near you, she picks imaginary little bits off your coat, then take it for granted she is really in love with you.

It is by no means in the spirit of Charles Lamb that Max O'Rell writes about money borrowing. He allows that the borrower has usually a keen sense of humour, but he does not love him for it. "I have no hesitation in saying that nine times out of ten the man who borrows money of a friend commits an act of indelicacy, the tenth time being often one of swindling." It would have been as well to have excepted (for of course it is an exception) the borrowing which is the mere asking for brief accommodation by a man who has his gold in the bank from a man who has his in his pocket. But a book like this is so much a budget of personal chat about things which can be put in many different ways that criticism has no place. The "Twenty Four Signs of True Love in a Woman" are irresponsible and unanswerable; some will go home to one reader, some to another. Here are two:—

16. If, when you are away from her one whole day, she expects a telegram from you with a prepaid answer.

24. If she should cry because you insist on wearing turn-down collars instead of the stand-up ones she likes—in which case you would be a brute not to immediately yield to her wish.

The split infinitive thrives in these pages. Well, there is the book—with a red girl on its green cover, and a deal of pleasant beckoning in its many chapters and myriad paragraphs,

Memorials of Charles Dixon Kimber. By Ada Thomson. (Nisbet. 5s.)

CHARLES DIXON KIMBER served in the 48th Company Imperial Yeomanry, yet this is not a war book, not memoirs, just memorials—a subtle distinction, perhaps, but sufficient to leave room for the author to "spatchcock" in between gaps in the diary-narrative, moral lessons, and examples of what can be done "for the glory of God" on the field of battle. Consequently the whole tone of the book is "elevating," and one learns much of what should be the religious emotion of Tommy, and the point of view of a man who is always at war with life's peccadilloes. Of course, there is more in the book than just this, and one gets an outsider's insight into the feelings of a self-conscious, religiously inclined man who finds himself thrown among a troop of Yeomanry. Here is a typical extract from the diary: "Speak to a Tommy on the railway platform who, playing with a dog, used the expression of Jesus Christ loudly and irreverently. I ask him to remember that, if he did not respect that name, others did, and I did. I ought to have said more, I think. . . ." And again: "Join in Palmer's meeting; a Bible meeting on the divinity of Christ. Chat and have refreshment and cigarette. Should not have smoked." Rather an interesting point in psychology is his escape from Nooitgedacht, whither he was removed by the Boers after the Lindley affair: "I was feeling very well and confident. I felt escape was part of my duty. I had asked God's blessing on it, and believed He would see me through it all." And so taking advantage of church parade (!) he and a comrade armed with two quarter-pound tins of Van Houten "cut the stick." It does not surprise one to learn that the profits derived from the sale of this book will be devoted to charitable objects, but one really feels that much that is lovingly set forth in this book by relatives with pardonable hero-worship might well have been left unsaid. The book winds up with some forty pages filled with letters of condolence.

The City of London authorities are proceeding with the publication of their ancient "Letter Books." The entries in *Letter Book D.* (Francis), formerly known as the *Liber Rubens*, from the colour of its original binding, covers the short period, 1309–1314, and is mainly a record of admissions to the freedom of the City by "redemption" between 1309 and 1312, as well as of the binding and discharge of apprentices for the same period. This is the earliest record of its kind extant among the City archives. The antiquary can make rich or curious use of these ancient records, and it only needs imagination to make them interesting to less professional readers. "The same day John de Wynchestre, cordwainer, gave pledge of a cask of wine to Richer de Refham, the Mayor, not to use abusive language in court." The names over shops must have been sumptuous reading in those days. "The same day came Adam atte Ponde de Alvesbourne, co. Suff., before the same and acknowledged himself apprentice of Richard Ballard de Chigendale, cheesemonger, for a term of seven years from Michaelmas next. For his ingress 2s. 6d."

Messrs. Longmans issue this week the *Annual Reports* for 1901, the first year of the century, and there is a melancholy fitness in the coincidence which enables the illness and death and funeral of Queen Victoria to be the subject of the first chapter. In every department of the volume there appears to be the thoroughness which has won for this publication its acknowledged importance and utility.

Of pretty garden books the public, it seems—or is it the publishers?—cannot have too many. Mr. Lane has made a pretty booklet of Lord Bacon's essay "Of Gardens," to which Mrs. Caldwell Crofton (Helen Milman) has contrived to write a pretty preface without mentioning Lord Bacon's part in the planting and laying out of the gardens of Gray's Inn, where a catalpa tree planted by him is still maintained in life,

Fiction.

The Valley of Decision. By Edith Wharton. (Murray. 6s.)

THERE is only one thing lacking here—*go*. As the reader bores his way through the mighty mass of one of the largest of contemporary novels, he realises with a kind of admiring despair that it is intended to submerge him in a period rather than to enthral him by Romance. Consciously submerged in the eighteenth century, his temporary habitat a non-existent duchy in Northern Italy, the reader admires the profusion of evidence collected about him by the industrious author to demonstrate that the time of day is as she names it. He admires the ingenuity with which Vulcanists and Illuminati and the more obvious properties at her disposal play their part in the grand demonstration. But scholarliness has damped the glow of creation; the effect is that of an *étude*, not of a living story. It suffers, too, from the great shade of De Stendhal with whose *Chartreuse de Parme*, though deposited in a period earlier by some decades than that classic, it necessarily provokes comparison. Italy in any period without love, rich, rhetorical, daring, is hardly to be thought of. A vision of Alfieri climbing his married mistress's fence when fresh from breaking his collar bone rises to the mind, a vision the less impertinent as his "lava-hued face crowned with flamboyant hair" is among the many which throng the post-Joelian "valley of decision." But the passion that glows, and still is slightly comic, in Alfieri's autobiography, and which blazes in Stendhal's *Fabrice*, is but palely glimpsed in Miss Wharton's pages, though we are to understand that its pains and raptures were by her chief characters felt with particular intensity. She has the courage to record, but not to paint; the fire, she says, in effect, is behind that screen. Once the fire peeps out with the result of illuminating a poor doubt-eaten duke whose morbidity is powerfully drawn. This peeping out of the fire shall serve us for quotation:—

A lamp burned before the image of the Madonna at the head of the bed, and two lighted flambeaux flanked the picture of the Last Judgment on the opposite wall. . . . A praying-stool stood beneath [the picture], and it was said that here, rather than before the Virgin's image, the melancholy prince performed his private devotions. . . . Crescenti had told Odo how the dying [duke's] thoughts had seemed to centre upon this dreadful subject, and how again and again, amid his ravings, he had cried out that the picture must be burned. . . . [Odo] saw in a flash all that the picture must have symbolized to his cousin's fancy; and in his desire to reconstruct that dying vision of fleshly retribution, he stepped close to the dintvch, resting a knee on the stool beneath it. As he did so, the picture suddenly opened, disclosing the inner panel. Odo caught up one of the flambeaux, and in its light, as on a sunlit wave, there stepped forth to him the lost Venus of Giorgione.

Odo is the idealistic hero of the novel. His career is described from the time when, as the neglected child of thrifless aristocrats, he lived with an ill-tempered peasant, to the time when he was glad to find a back door out of his own duchy. His is largely a story of indecisions, but the moral of his life seems to be that reformers should be single-hearted, and that the most beautiful altruism accepted for policy by a ruler from his mistress will be considered mischievous by his other subjects. To Odo a light o' love would have meant less danger than the Fulvia who was compounded "of all fine meanings." Odo begins and ends for the reader as one of the natural disciples of the saint of Assisi—one who has tasted both power and bliss, and being deprived of both, is humbly observant of his own deficiency.

Miss Wharton has written with unfailing grace of style and many of the dexterities of the artist. To include Pianura among the itineraries of the famous Arthur Young, and to offer thereunto a fictitious contribution from his journals,

have almost the effect of giving the duchy geographical identity. Young, it seems, would have grown turnips there. Let some other Suffolk squire follow his example, and meanwhile let Miss Wharton return to her delicate modern situations and stories. It is hardly rash to say that therein lies her truest talent.

The One Before. By Barry Pain. (Grant Richards. 3s. 6d.)

THIS is a thoroughly amusing story told with all Mr. Barry Pain's kindly cynicism. The central idea, hinted at in the title, is a ring which is to be used for the reformation of Mr. Ernest Saunders Barley, a "ridiculous little squirt" who does fretwork and is generally speaking a domestic muff with a tendency to bully a pretty wife. The ring has the mysterious property of transferring to the temporary wearer the qualities of the one before. Now in this case the one before—though Nathaniel Brookes the giver had forgotten it—was a lion tamer. And Mr. Barley handed the ring on to his wife, who at once proceeds to train her husband in the way he should go. Mr. Pain would have made a more novel story if he had stuck to this idea and worked it out—as he certainly could—mixing up characters among the various wearers of the ring. For the rest of the story he has fallen back on the dim East which is intriguing and plotting for the recovery of this mysterious ring. If one were to judge fact from fiction, one would imagine that the P. & O. passengers consisted mainly of Orientals pledged to recover jewellery which has come into Western hands. But Mr. Pain's story is full of amusing characters. Nathaniel Brookes, who never forgets anything, but cannot remember anything at the moment it is wanted; Carcow the Jew, and Nathan his brother-in-law; Johnson, the feeble private secretary who is a stickler for grammar, are all delightful; and best of all are the two maidservants, Jane and her friend Ellen—called Maudie below stairs—who discuss the situation. The conversation between Jane and Maudie from the moment when "having made a fair division of one penny-worth of pine-apple drops, Jane kicked off her shoes and stretched herself on her bed," until Maudie said, "Now 'old your row, my dear, for a moment; I'm going to say my prayers"—is one of the cleverest bits of dialogue that Mr. Pain has written.

Patricia of the Hills. By Charles Kennett Burrow. (Laurence and Bullen. 6s.)

TO our mind this novel is weakest where a novel should be strongest, that is, in grasp of character and truth to life. Dick Charteris, who is both narrator and hero, is everywhere alleged to be a much finer fellow than his words and actions declare him. A less strenuous lover we have seldom met in fiction. When he can be of real service to Patricia he proposes weakly, and is rejected. It is only when the girl has found the ways of poverty and London concert-singing difficult, and lies unconscious at death's door, "colourless as a crushed rose leaf, thin as a starved bird," that Charteris can be sure that he loves her. "I took her to my heart there and cherished her as I had never done before: for once she was weaker than I." It is not by such pale degrees, and in a sick room, that a young man's love leaps to a flame. Yet Dick is intended to be a virile lover. Accordingly, the reader is inclined to side against his author, and wish that Patricia might be given to Lord Clogher, who, though persistently written down as detrimental, seems a very decent fellow—no loiterer like Charteris, in love and politics.

Nor are we quite convinced by the circumstances which introduces the crisis of the story. Is it really a moral catastrophe for a young concert-singer and inviolately pure woman to sing simple ballads at the Empire Music Hall? For it is the moral, not the professional, aspects that Patricia has in mind when she compares her going

thither to the giving of her blood. Of course, when Dick hears of it she has been singing in Leicester Square a whole week. His horror is such that it takes him five minutes to tie his dress bow before going to hear her himself, but, once there, he joins with painted sinners in applauding the girl whom he has come to rescue, before taking her home in a cab and another rapture of indignation.

This is hardly life; it is a framework of studio motives set up by the author—and not fully adhered to—to carry literary effects and to justify a great deal of detail excellent in itself.

Yet *Patricia of the Hills* is very delicately written, and where human motives and character are not too deeply concerned, it is notably good. Father Shannon is a live Irish priest, and James Sheehan is a live Irish poacher. There is a strong and touching picture of starvation in an Irish cabin, and all the landscape work is fine. Of Mr. Burrow's rhythmic and graceful prose we have given no example, but here is a haunting sentence: "It is the 'shalt nots' that are the shepherds of the world, and will be, I suppose, until night shuts down for ever on the fold."

Notes on Novels.

[These notes on the Week's Fiction are not necessarily final.
Reviews of a selection will follow.]

THE PRINCE OF THE CAPTIVITY. BY SYDNEY C. GRIER.

A long novel of high politics—a novel wherein most of the characters are persons of high rank, including kings and queens. A grand-duchess marries the hero, who is a lord. The Prince of the Captivity is an Englishman of noble parentage, who has played a part in the re-establishment of the Jews in the kingdom of Zion. A conscientious but somewhat bewildering story. (Blackwood. 6s.)

THE ZIONISTS. BY WINIFRED GRAHAM.

An earnest story of Jewish life and aspiration towards Zionism. Alexander is the central figure, and if we say that he is described from without rather than from within, it is but to say that Miss Graham, however sincere her intentions, is not among the great novelists. "First and foremost," said Alexander on one occasion, "I am determined to solve the problem, at all events, as to whether the majority of Jews really wish for a kingdom in Palestine." (Hutchinson. 6s.)

THE CHAMPION. BY MARY L. PENDERED AND ALICE STRONACH.

The scene of this long and interesting story is laid in Scotland, and reveals an intimate knowledge of Highland life and character. It centres around Everich Lyndhurst, who goes among the Highland folk as school-teacher, and tells of the emotional and other experiences that happened to her there. A book for those who have plenty of leisure hours. There is some, but not too much, dialect. (Harpers. 6s.)

THE PASSING OF THE FLAGSHIP. BY MAJOR W. P. DRURY.

Ten short stories by the author of *Bearers of the Burden*, a book which brought to the writer some reputation as a humourist. The first story lends its title to this volume. It begins: "The best man at a funeral, I observed, pessimistically, the wind being E. by N., is the man in the box." The author relies overmuch on the pretensions of queer names to produce a smile. One of the stories is called "Casserbanker the Second." (Bullen. 3s. 6d.)

THE HINDERERS. BY EDNA LYALL.

A short novel, with an obvious moral. It is dedicated to the secretary of the Boer women and children clothing fund; the first chapter is headed by a quotation from a sermon by Canon Scott Holland, and Irene's final wish is that "she might serve the country, and have some little

part in hastening that kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy which will satisfy every human heart." (Longmans. 2s. 6d.)

THE POET AND PENELOPE. BY L. P. TRUSCOTT.

A bright and clever love story, told with an air of unobtrusive gaiety that captures the reader's sympathy. We judge L. Parry Truscott, the author, to be a lady. The Poet and Penelope are pleasant companions, and if he was not quite so great a poet as Penelope thought, her illusions make for a pleasant story, the end of which finds the Poet safe in Penelope's web. (Fisher Unwin. 6s.)

AN INLAND FERRY. BY SUSAN CHRISTIAN.

A modern story with a prologue and an epilogue, delicately written and characterised. In effect, it is a study of several feminine characters, including two sisters, the offspring of a peer's daughter who had married an East End clergyman. There is a good deal of idealistic talk in the book. Says Josephine on one occasion: "Of course there is always the hiatus between the vision and the actual task." Later she asks the pertinent question: "Do you think me rather a prig?" (Smith Elder. 6s.)

MISS CHESTERTON'S DECISION. BY PHILIP TREHERNE.

A short and unambitious novel. The action passes for the most part in Surrey, and the story deals with certain aspects of social life, and with the progress of a youthful love episode. "'You won't tell Aunt Sarah,' said Tom. 'I shall do my duty,' was the reply. The distant sound of quivering violins, the soft strains of the *Salut D'Amour* fell on their ears, as they walked in silence to the house." (Fisher Unwin. 6s.)

THE DAME OF THE FINE GREEN KIRTLE. BY TORQUIL MACLEOD.

A number of Celtic tales—"Alastair, my son, the old *cailleach* would say as she looked out at the door, there goes Callum Beg, with the sly look on his face, and Linnhe Town has seen the last of that one." The Tales are divided into three groups. To "Tales of Lochaber" there are six chapters; to "Tales of the Isles" seven; to "Tales of the North" four. A desirable book for those that like this kind of thing. (John Long. 2s. 6d.)

THE DANE'S DAUGHTER. BY WALMER DOWNE.

An Icelandic story, with pictures of an Icelandic girl spinning, cutting ice in winter at Reykjavik, &c. The narrative is interesting and well-knit, when once the names are acclimatised to the eye. Thus "Bartholomew sat smoking with his two friends in the Reykjavik Hotel. He could not remain longer at Siöburg, as Herr and Fru Thorláksson had gone on a visit to Thingvalla Parsonage." (Pearson. 6s.)

THE NEW PARISIANS. BY W. F. LONERGAN.

Dedicated "to some of the students of the Old Sorbonne, who fought on the battlefields of 1870 and 1871," this is a story of French student life in the Latin quarter. "An endeavour" says the author, "is made to delineate something of the life of young men in that district who are not Artists and Sculptors, but Students of Law, Literature and Medicine. Art life has been overdone." (Sands. 6s.)

THE DEMAGOGUE. BY CARLTON DAWE.

His name was Philip Morwyn; he was a Hyde Park orator, and we are permitted to read one of the speeches he delivered in Hyde Park. "The man spoke to them as a man, as one having authority, but not the authority of law or gilded vestments." Among his audience was Diana, Countess of Casterton, and—several hundred pages later, "You understand me, Diana?" he said in a voice which she scarcely recognised, the intensity of his emotion causing it to vibrate so strangely. "Do you think me worthy of being your husband?" (Hodder and Stoughton. 6s.)

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London's Mystery of Change.

THE body of a man renews all its particles once in seven years; London does not accomplish as much in seven centuries, and to the end of his life the Londoner finds something elusive and mysterious in the changing face of his city. The changes leave so much sameness, the sameness hides so much change. Where indeed, and what, is the civic entity which he syllables as London? Great tracts of it he has never seen; he has never crossed over Shooter's Hill, never walked through Spitalfields, or never explored that backyard of civilisation, the York Road, N.; he knows not Shadwell nor De Beauvoir Town, and as for Golden Square it may be that he has sought it diligently all the days of his life and has not found it. Again, he has known several Londons. There was the London of his youth into which he came with gleaming eye and burning feet. There was the London of his middle age in which he kept to certain streets, and caught certain trains. And there is the London on which his memory has time to play. Yet the three are one; he cannot calculate the long change.

This helplessness besets even a young man who would indicate the change which has come over London between, say, his twentieth and thirty-fifth year. Its detail and subtlety defy capture. He begins to enumerate little differences, but they seem trivial and inexpressive. He feels the difference, but cannot total it. Fifteen years ago, he will tell you, the 'bus-conductor clutched the milliner's skirt to assist her decorous ascent of an iron ladder. It was a characteristic and daily action in the streets. Fifteen years ago touts at the entrance of Doctor's Commons invited you to buy the right to marry. Fifteen years ago there were trespass boards and hay-cocks on Parliament Hill; Hampstead Heath was unemptily beautiful, and the gipsy woman, rising like a flame from the gorse, lent her wildness to the miles beyond. In those far times the Foot Guards wore their bearskins in the streets on Sunday, and it was a sight for the gods to see a six-foot private, thus crested, walking to the Park with a diminutive Jill from a Pont Street kitchen. In the dusk the wide path from the Serpentine to the Marble Arch was one long sinuous blackness, above which the bearskins swayed against the clear green sky; and it looked like a crowd, and it looked like a forest, and it looked like nothing in the world but a young man's London.

In the late eighties there was a vestige of credit in walking through Seven Dials alone; and Saffron Hill was a habitation of dragons. Half Bloomsbury was closed to cabs by wooden bars tended by watchmen in gold-laced hats, and scraps of village green still kept Islington merry. There was no Charing Cross Road to chill St. Giles's, and no railway to dissect St. John's Wood. In Holborn you might stray through the square carriage-way of Furnival's Inn, past Dickens's old lodgings, into the quiet square with its fountain and rhododendrons. Hard by was Ridler's—hospitable Ridler's, where, as you passed the door, you saw pewter candlesticks on the hall table,

if, indeed, you were imbecile enough not to step straight into the eighteenth century and call for a port negus, which presently was brought to you by a waiter who, in lineaments and dignity, was the double of Mr. Speaker Peel. When Ridler's came down, they talked of rebuilding it and keeping the candlesticks; but it was soon seen that the play was ended. Shall we recall the "Bull and Mouth" tavern, opposite the old Post Office, and the little red 'buses that trundled you up to the "Angel"? Shall we register the thrill with which, in some quiet street, aware only of stranger millions, one met William Ewart Gladstone?

Now, it has always been thus. A few years have always brought such changes to Londoners, and their annals are full of their pasts within pasts. You may go back to John Stow, and you will find him recalling the London of his boyhood in the same strain as Sir Walter Besant recalls it in his autobiography. Writing about Goodman's Fields, that now populous and Hebraic district of Whitechapel just outside the City boundary, he remarks: "Near adjoining to this abbey [the Minorities], on the south side thereof, was sometime a farm belonging to the said nunnery; at the which farm I myself in my youth have fetched many a half-penny worth of milk, and never had less than three ale pints for a halfpenny in the summer, nor less than one ale quart for a halfpenny in the winter, always hot from the kine as the same was milked and strained."

Another curious circumstance is that there has never been a time in the last four hundred years when the size of London did not warm and alarm the Londoner's imagination; it has always seemed to have reached the limits of conceivable growth. Indeed, this sense of the vastness of London seems to have been stronger one and two hundred years ago. When the area of the London streets was small enough to tempt as well as defeat the powers of the mind, it may well have produced effects which are lost now. To-day, for the individual Londoner vast areas do not count, and the sense of distance is annihilated by the blank walls of tubes and tunnels. A hundred years ago London was small and rural compared with its present state; and yet early in the last century a West countryman, a man of property, entering London by coach for the first time in his life, was so appalled by the endless vistas of lamps and the labyrinths of streets that he lost his reason. Slipping out of his inn in Lad Lane, he disappeared. Six weeks later he was found wandering about at Sherborne, in Dorsetshire. A brief cure was effected before he died, and he related that he had been obsessed by the idea that he would never be extricated from the network of streets, and this had turned his brain. It is impossible to think that London seemed smaller to Londoners then than the London of to-day seems to ourselves. And yet the difference between their and our London cannot be estimated. You came into London by country roads and turnpikes. As late as 1818, David Cox sat down in St. George's Fields to paint London and St. Paul's with the gable ends of the Waterloo Road advancing into a foreground of pastures and grazing cattle.

Nothing seems so dim and untraceable as these over-laid Londons which in their day filled the imaginations and wore out the strength of our grandfathers. You may vision a piece here and a piece there in books and prints, but the aspect of any large and typical portion can rarely be recovered. Yet one exception, at least, exists: in one document the London of a bygone day has been captured in dogged detail and left to us in such a form that it is possible to walk in spirit along two miles of a great London highway of one hundred years ago, counting the lamp-posts, reading the numbers on house-doors, stepping over gutters and gratings, noting the patterns of front gardens, distinguishing granite and macadam, gazing into shop windows, drinking at pumps, pausing at the doors of barracks and great houses and churches—in a word,

walking the streets of the London of Byron, Rogers, and Pitt and Castlereagh and Wellington. We refer to the London Topographical Society's recently issued reproduction of the plan of the road from Hyde Park Corner to Addison Road made in 1811 by Joseph Salway, surveyor to the Kensington Turnpike Trustees.

Intended primarily as a record of drains, these plans go much further, and give us not only a minute ground-plan of the road, but the elevations of all the houses, walls, and other wayside objects along the whole length of the road, on its north side, between the points we have named. These beautiful drawings have long reposed in the MS. Department of the British Museum, and it is to the enterprise of the London Topographical Society and of its secretary, Mr. T. Fairman Ordish, that we owe their reproduction in coloured facsimile. The scale is one inch to twenty feet, and the sheets placed end to end measure something like thirty yards. The effect is unique, indeed the combined interest of bygone and surviving London in the drawings can be appreciated only by the eye.

Every name has the note of sober actuality. For example, a great house is marked simply with the words "William Wilberforce, Esquire." Twenty-five years later this house would have been marked "Lady Blessington," for it is the Gore House of many memories. Wilberforce found this house more salubrious, and perhaps a little livelier, than his house at Clapham. He writes: "We are just one mile from the turnpike at Hyde Park Corner, having about three acres of pleasure-ground around our house, or rather behind it, and several old trees, walnut and mulberry, of thick foliage. I can sit and read under their shade with as much admiration of the beauties of nature as if I were two hundred miles from the great city." Here the Abolitionists met to free the slave and to ameliorate human life. They were followed by Lady Blessington and all her tribe of butterflies, a circumstance which inspired James Smith's epigram:—

Mild Wilberforce, by all beloved,
Once own'd this hallowed spot,
Whose zealous eloquence improved
The fetter'd Negro's lot;

Yet here still slavery attacks
When Blessington invites;
The chains from which he freed the Blacks
She rivets on the Whites.

Nothing would be easier, nothing more pleasant, than to stroll and gossip along this fine old road of 1811, from Hyde Park Turnpike down to the cobbler's stall on the pavement as the corner of Sloane Street, and the terrace which Charles Reade afterwards dubbed Naboth's Vineyard when fighting a public body for his lease; thence past the Watch House at Knightsbridge Green, past the old Horse Barracks to the Half Way House with its straggling stables and pig-styes (affronting gentility); past great residences like Kingston and Stratheden Houses, and inns like the "Fox and Bull," with its sign painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds and its pewters drained by George Morland, and so on to Kensington Street, with its inns and stable-yards. Beyond old Kensington Church there are banks, hedges, and ditches on both sides of the road, which runs through open country as far as Stanford Brook. The plans end at Counter's Bridge with Lee and Kennedy's Nursery. At this point the responsibilities of the Kensington Turnpike Trustees ceased.

Ours must cease too. We will only add that to the close student of London these plans are a document of the greatest value. Alike in what they show and in what they suggest they are a clue to London's mystery of change.

The Truth about an Author.

Chapters in Autobiography.

IV.

I CAME to London at the age of twenty-one, with no definite ambition, and no immediate object save to escape from an intellectual and artistic environment which had long been excessively irksome to me. Some achievement of literature certainly lay in the abyss of my desires, but I allowed it to remain there, vague and almost unnoticed. As for provincial journalism, without meed in coin, it had already lost the charm of novelty, and I had been doing it in a perfunctory manner. I made no attempt to storm Fleet Street. The fact is that I was too much engaged in making a meal off London, swallowing it, to attend to anything else; this repast continued for over two years. I earned a scanty living as short-hand clerk, at first, in a solicitor's office; but a natural gift for the preparation of bills of costs for taxation, that highly delicate and complicated craft, and an equally natural gift for advancing my own interests, soon put me in receipt of an income that many "admitted" clerks would have envied: to be exact and prosaic, two hundred a year. Another clerk in the office happened to be an ardent bibliophile. We became friends, and I owe him much. He could chatter in idiomatic French like a house on fire, and he knew the British Museum Reading Room from its centre to its periphery. He first taught me to regard a book, not as an instrument for obtaining information or emotion, but as a *book*, printed at such a place in such a year by so-and-so, bound by so-and-so, and carrying colophons, registers, water-marks, and *fautes d'impression*. He was acquainted, I think, with every second-hand bookstall in the metropolis; and on Saturday afternoons we visited most of them. We lived for bargains and rarities. We made it a point of honour to buy one book every day, and when bargains failed we used to send out the messengers for a Camelot Classic or so—ninepence net; this series was just then at the height of its vogue. We were for ever bringing into the office formidable tomes—the choice productions of the presses of Robert and Henry Stephen, Elzevir, Baskerville, Giunta, Foulis, and heaven knows whom. My discovery of the Greek *editio princeps* of Plutarch, printed by Philip Giunta at Florence in 1517, which I bought in Whitechapel for two shillings, nearly placed me on a level with my preceptor. We decidedly created a sensation in the office. The "admitted" clerks and the article clerks, whom legal etiquette forbids as a rule to fraternise with the "unadmitted," took a naive and unaffected pleasure in our society. One day I was examining five enormous folios full-bound in yellow calf, in the clients' waiting-room, when the senior partner surprised me thus wasting the firm's time.

"What's all this?" he enquired politely. He was far too polite to remonstrate.

"This, sir? Bayle's *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique*," I replied.

"Is it yours?"

"Yes, sir. I bought it in the lunch-hour at Hodgson's."

"Ah!"

He retired abashed. He was a gentle fellow, and professed an admiration for Browning; but the chief thing of which he had the right to be proud was his absolutely beautiful French accent.

I had scarcely been in London a year when my friend and I decided to collaborate in a bibliographical dictionary of rare and expensive books in all European languages. Such a scheme sounds farcical, but we were perfectly serious over it; and the proof of our seriousness is that we worked at it every morning before breakfast. I may mention also that we lunched daily at the British Museum, much to the detriment of our official duties. For months we must have been quite mad—obsessed. We got about

as far as the New English Dictionary travelled in the first twenty years of its life, that is to say, two-thirds through A; and then suddenly, irrationally, without warning, we dropped it. The mere conception of this dictionary was so splendid that there was a grandeur even in dropping it.

Soon after this, the managing clerk of the office, a university man, autocratic, but kindly and sagacious, bought a country practice and left us. He called me into his room to say good-bye.

"You'd no business to be here," he said, sharply. "You ought to be doing something else. If I find you here when I visit town next, I shall look on you as a d—d fool. Don't forget what I say."

I did not. On the contrary, his curt speech made a profound impression on me. He was thirty, and a man of the world; I was scarcely twenty-three. My self-esteem, always vigorous, was flattered into all sorts of new developments. I gradually perceived that, quite without intending it, I had acquired a reputation. As what? Well, as a learned youth not lacking in brilliance. And this reputation had, I am convinced, sprung solely from the habit of buying books printed mainly in languages which neither myself nor my acquaintances could read. I owned hundreds of books, but I seldom read any of them except the bibliographical manuals; I had no leisure to read. I scanned. I can only remember, in this period, that I really studied one book—Plato's *Republic*, which I read because I thought I was doing the correct thing. Beyond this, and a working knowledge of French, and an entirely sterile apparatus of bibliographical technique, I had mastered nothing. Three qualities I did possess, and on these three qualities I have traded ever since. First, an omnivorous and tenacious memory (now, alas, effete!)—the kind of memory that remembers how much London spends per day in cab fares just as easily as the order of Shakespeare's plays or the stock anecdotes of Shelley and Byron. Second, a naturally sound taste in literature. And third, the invaluable, despicable, disingenuous journalistic faculty of seeming to know much more than one does know. None knew better than I that, in any exact, scholarly sense, I knew nothing of literature. Nevertheless, I should have been singularly blind not to see that I knew far more about literature than nine-tenths of the people around me. These people pronounced me an authority, and I speedily accepted myself as an authority: were not my shelves a silent demonstration? By insensible degrees I began to assume the pose of an authority. I have carried that pose into newspaper offices and the very arcana of literary culture, and never yet met with a disaster. Yet in the whole of my life I have not devoted one day to the systematic study of literature. In truth, it is absurdly easy to impress even persons who in the customary meaning of the term have the right to call themselves well-educated. I remember feeling very shy one night in a drawing-room rather new to me. My host had just returned from Venice, and was describing the palace where Browning lived; but he could not remember the name of it.

"Rezzonico," I said at once, and I chanced to intercept the look of astonishment that passed between host and hostess.

I frequented that drawing-room a great deal afterwards, and was always expected to speak *ex cathedra* on English literature.

London the entity was at least as good as my dreams of it, but the general mass of the persons composing it, considered individually, were a sad disappointment. "What duffers!" I said to myself again and again. "What duffers!" I had come prepared to sit provincially at the feet of these Londoners! I was humble enough when I arrived, but they soon cured me of that—they were so ready to be impressed! What struck me

was the extraordinary rarity of the men who really could "do their job." And when I found them, they were invariably provincials like me who had come up with the same illusions and suffered the same enlightenment. All who were successfully performing that feat known as "getting on" were provincials. I enrolled myself in their ranks. I said that I would get on. The "d—d fool" phrase of the Chancery clerk rang in my ears like a bugle to march.

And for about a year I didn't move a step. I read more than I have ever read before or since. But I did nothing. I made no effort, nor did I subject myself to any mental discipline. I simply gorged on English and French literature for the amusement I could extract from such gluttony, and found physical exercise in becoming the champion of an excessively suburban lawn-tennis club. I wasted a year in contemplating the magnificence of my future doings. Happily I never spoke these dreams aloud! They were only the private solace of my idleness. Now it was that I at last decided upon the vocation of letters; not scholarship, not the dilettantism of belles-lettres, but sheer constructive journalism and possibly fiction. London, however, is chiefly populated by grey-haired men who for twenty years have been about to become journalists and authors. And but for a fortunate incident—the thumb of my Fate has always been turned up—I might ere this have fallen back into that tragic rearguard of Irresolutes.

Through the good offices of my appreciative friends who had forgotten the name of the Palazzo Rezzonico, I was enabled to take up my quarters in the abode of some artists at Chelsea. I began to revolve, dazzled, in a circle of painters and musicians who, without the least affectation, spelt Art with the majuscule; indeed, it never occurred to them that people existed who would spell it otherwise. I was compelled to set to work on the reconstruction of nearly all my ideals. I had lived in a world where beauty was not mentioned, seldom thought of. I believe I had scarcely heard the adjective "beautiful" applied to anything whatever, save confections like Gounod's "There is a green hill far away." Modern oak sideboards were called handsome, and Christmas cards were called pretty; and that was about all. But now I found myself among souls that talked of beauty openly and unashamed. On the day that I arrived at the house in Chelsea, the drawing-room had just been papered, and the pattern of the frieze resembled nothing in my experience. I looked at it.

"Don't you think our frieze is charming?" the artist enquired, his eyes glistening.

It was the man's obvious sincerity that astounded me. O muse of mahogany and green rep! Here was a creature who took a serious interest in the pattern of his wall-papers! I expressed my enthusiasm for the frieze.

"Yes," he replied, with simple solemnity. "*It is very beautiful.*"

This worship of beauty was continuous. The very teaspoons were banned or blessed on their curves, and as for my rare editions, they wilted under tests to which they were wholly unaccustomed. I possessed a *rarissime* illustrated copy of *Manon Lescaut*, of which I was very proud, and I showed it with pride to the artist. He remarked that it was one of the ugliest books he had ever seen.

"But," I cried, "you've no idea how scarce it is! It's worth—"

He laughed.

I perceived that I must begin life again, and I began it again, sustained in my first efforts by the all-pervading atmosphere of ardour. My new intimates were not only keenly appreciative of beauty, they were bent on creating it. They dreamed of great art-works, lovely compositions, impassioned song. Music and painting they were familiar with, and from me they were serenely sure of literature. The glorious accent with which they clothed that word—

literature! Aware beforehand of my authority, my enthusiasm, they accepted me with quick, warm sympathy as a fellow-idealist. Then they desired to know what I was engaged upon, what my aims were, and other facts exceedingly difficult to furnish.

It happened that the most popular of all popular weeklies had recently given a prize of a thousand pounds for a sensational serial. When the serial had run its course, the editor offered another prize of twenty guineas for the best humorous condensation of it in two thousand words. I thought I might try for that, but I feared that my friends would not consider it "art." I was mistaken. They pointed out that caricature was a perfectly legitimate form of art, often leading to much original beauty, and they urged me to enter the lists. They read the novel in order the better to enjoy the caricature of it, and when, after six evenings' labour, my work was done, they fiercely exulted in it. Out of the fulness of technical ignorance they predicted with certainty that I should win the prize.

Here again life plagiarised the sentimental novel, for I did win the guineas. My friends were delighted, but they declined to admit a particle of surprise. Their belief in what I could do kept me awake at nights.

This was my first pen-money, earned within two months of my change of air. I felt that the omen was favourable.

(To be continued.)

Classes of Novelists.

IN an appreciation of Mr. Henry Lawson's work in the ACADEMY some weeks ago, I referred incidentally to the work of those English novelists who give us fancy pictures of the "upper classes" or "lower classes" instead of presenting us with truthful descriptions of the class to which they themselves belong, or the life which they know intimately. Mr. G. S. Street replied to this passage of my paper in an interesting article in the ACADEMY of April 5, and his remarks, I think, are well worth attention in reference to the prevalence of bad fiction. Mr. Street first observed that in my paper it was "alleged that members by birth of the middle class had no business to write about these upper classes." But this I had not alleged. Why indeed should I? Does not the artistic value—whatever it may be—of Mr. Street's own writings largely depend on the fact that they bring before us, with a certain careful acumen, the mental atmosphere of bored, wearily self-conscious young men in the society of "the rich and leisured classes"? (See *A Book of Stories*.) So far from questioning Mr. Street's (or any other clever writer's) instinct to describe the upper class life with which he is familiar, a critic might conscientiously urge him to go much further in that direction, and become a specialist in the artistic analysis of that very society whose life Mr. Street characterises a little harshly by the sentence: "Most rich people lead vapid and vulgar lives." It is not my purpose here to criticise *A Book of Stories*, save in relation to my main argument, so I pass to a passage in the article "Novelists and Classes," in which Mr. Street re-states admirably for me the general argument:—

What is desirable is not that a man should write about the people in whose class he is born, but that he should write about the people he best understands.

This hits the nail on the head; but, as a corollary, one may add—the besetting sin of the writer of poor fiction lies in not realising for us the class life he *does* understand, and in idealising the class life he *doesn't*. And here Mr. Street apparently parts company from me. He pleads that "the important business of the novelist is not with the habits of his people, but with their minds and emotions. Why should he be told to assume the greater interests of the bricklayer's over the duke's?" The

novelist is, of course, not told to assume anything of the kind; but let us allow Mr. Street to develop his argument:—

It is an old commonplace that the justification of a leisured class is that it has time for grand passions, and short of grand passions there is a whole range of ideas and ambitions, complexities of emotion, byways of emotion which may be interesting or amusing to read of, and which are possible to one life and not to the other. . . . But of external beauty there can be no question which life has the larger share, and it can hardly be maintained that it is either pleasanter or helpfuller to dwell imaginatively in a two-pair-back down a blind alley, than to dwell imaginatively in an old Tudor country house.

Here we would seem to be travelling by nice and insensible degrees somewhat away from the leading contention—

What is desirable is that a man should write about the people he best understands,

and to be, in fact, *en route* for the "upper class" goal, which Mr. Street would seem to reach in the following passage:—

. . . For all these reasons I applaud those writers who, knowing the life of the rich, prefer to describe it. I can even find it in my heart to excuse those who, knowing it not, prefer to imagine it. They find in the surroundings they imagine a fitting background, a larger field for passions and minds they may really have studied.

This defence is a very interesting one, for under its sheltering wings three-quarters of the bad fiction of the day may claim the right of sanctuary. Let us find how it works in practice. As Mr. Street has remarked that the present writer "delivered an athletic kick in the direction of authors who are not Mr. Henry Lawson," let us bar that Australian writer from the discussion, and find another illustration for our argument in a book lately reprinted—*The Fields of Dulditch*, by Mrs. Mary E. Mann.

Now the people of *The Fields of Dulditch* would seem to be a little handicapped in Mr. Street's eyes. They are all of that inferior station, and suffer from those social limitations and disabilities, which Mr. Street describes when he deals with the bricklayer:—

By the time the bricklayer has laid his bricks—even in the *ca' canny* system—his energies are fairly tired out! Food, drink, and rest necessarily bound his horizon. The outlets for his passions are few; the number of his acquaintances with whom he feels the freedom of social equality is small. Whereas the duke . . . but it is superfluous to go on. . . .

In the case of the people in *The Fields of Dulditch*, we are not called upon to "dwell imaginatively in an old Tudor country house," as Mr. Street calls us to do in his story "Like to Like." On the contrary, they are poor, struggling people, agricultural labourers, cottage women, humble domestics dwelling in country hovels, or in "two pair backs down blind alleys"; and further, these people are all summed up through the eyes of a middle-class writer, and yet and yet these humble people whose "outlets for passion are few, and the number of acquaintances with whom they feel the freedom of social equality are small," make Mr. Street's hero and heroine in "Like to Like" seem uncommonly *made-up* and lifeless. Why is that? Is it perhaps because Mr. Street has relied a little too much on the formula of "birth and breeding" and "external beauty" for his effects, while Mrs. Mann has watched sympathetically with an artist's eye the human life round her merely as human life? Is it not perhaps that Mrs. Mann has got closer to human nature? And is it not largely the refusal of the mediocre average novelist to get close to nature by studying from the social life around him that makes his work so terribly vapid and foolish? Instead of studying men and women in a definite social environment, he transplants his characters into an environment which he does not *know*, and he goes hunting for

"external beauty," for "upper-class," or "imaginary" surroundings in order to find Mr. Street's "fitting background and larger field." With what results we know! It is curious that we do not find the masters concerning themselves much with "imaginary backgrounds." However, letting that pass, if we try Mrs. Mann's *The Fields of Dulditch* by the high standard of fidelity to nature, her stories, if not masterpieces of art, are masterly in their deep observation of, and delicate sympathy with, human life. In one or two of her stories, such as "Ben Pitcher's Elly," it is true the middle-class point of view rather gets the better of the natural atmosphere of her subject; but other stories, such as "The Witch of Dulditch," "A Dulditch Courting," and "The Gal La'rences," stand comparison well with the sketches of the best French and Russian realists. There is a story in the book, "The Lost Housen," which is as powerful in its grim intensity as anything that Maupassant conceived. Certainly it needs a little re-handling. Only an English novelist, one is tempted to think, could have been content to leave so wonderful a sketch in the rough "first draft" state, and not have worked on it again and again till its technique did full justice to the creative insight which penetrated to the human passion it reveals. The main point, however, we desire to emphasize in drawing attention to *The Fields of Dulditch* is the entertaining fact that the cottars and paupers and field labourers of Mrs. Mann show far more grand passion, far more heroism, and far more spiritual beauty in their lives than do Mr. Street's "rich and leisured" characters! It is very curious! One would think, by Mr. Street's dictum on the bricklayer, "food, drink, and rest necessarily bound his horizon," that these poor people of Dulditch would have scarcely time to be interesting! But what do we find? There is a sketch of a poor, coarse servant girl, Our Mary, in "The People of Dulditch," and I confess it brings to me revelations in the byways of emotion which Mr. Street's half-dozen well-bred heroines with all their leisure for the finer shades have not communicated to him. It is very curious! There is another sketch of a bed-ridden "Gran'mawther," and a little grandchild who slaves for her for sixpence a week, and then steals in by night to rob flour for her mother (p. 215), and I confess that I find more delicacy of penetration in this page than in all Mr. Street's exposition of "the English gentleman's attitude to life" (see p. 222 of *A Book of Stories*).

The fact is Mr. Street's stories are truer to the life of the rich than his theory would lead one to expect. Wherever he scores a point in his tales it is in developing the secret thesis that rich English people tend to suffer spiritually and mentally from the absence of real passion, real struggle, and real interests in their lives; and so that at last out of this actual limitation and attenuation of their range of real emotion are evolved Mr. Street's painfully bored wearily self-conscious young men!

Now it is a commonplace that in the hands of the true artist, "middle-class" and "upper-class" life will yield us revelations no less significant than the field labourer's life yields us in *The Fields of Dulditch*. So long as the novelist is artistically in sympathy with his subject, or has intuitive penetration into the human life he wishes to paint, it matters nothing whether he write of the "leisured" or of the "working" class; but we may point out that the middle-class novelists who prefer "to dwell imaginatively in an old Tudor country house," not merely tend to caricature the formula and class conventions of "Society," but bow themselves down before the false image they have weakly fabricated! That is to say, instead of studying human nature delicately and finely as Mrs. Mann studies it in "The People of Dulditch," their characters, minds and emotions are largely dictated by these fictitious surroundings of "fitting backgrounds" and "larger fields." If Mrs. Mann were first to invent and then live up to the formula of the English field-labourer's life, she would be

a very poor artist! Yet this is what half the English "popular" novelists do in respect to their novels of "sensational," their descriptions of "foreign life," their seriously elaborated "pictures" of "aristocratic" life, and this is why the sawdust runs out of their joints a month after they are handed across Mr. Mudie's counter.

All this is of course very well known to Mr. Street as a clever writer. No doubt he realises better than we do (for has he not made a special study of the "vapid and vulgar life led by most rich people"?) that the pathetic fallacy of the "comfortable" classes lies in believing that if they can only get their "externals" of life beautiful and perfect enough, they have found their spiritual salvation. Whereas the people in his *Book of Stories* show us in his words that "their houses and yachts and all that" may reduce their chroniclers to making them positively tedious by the side of the people of Dulditch. Mr. Street, however, does not quite seem to the present critic to realise that there is a great field before him, should he throw off what an ACADEMY reviewer has termed his "pre-occupation with the theory of what it is to be a lady and gentleman"; and set himself to analyse more keenly the life of the vulgar rich. He has a delightful sketch of a young and budding politician in his story, "A Comedy of North and South." If he would continue his researches into the peculiar woodenness of this type of English "upper-middle-class" mind, and make his hero's experiences symbolical of the way "Society's" current is setting, he might write a novel which—well, let us content ourselves by saying he has the field almost to himself. The alternative is, of course, for him to dwell imaginatively "in an old Tudor country house," which, by the way, has no eyes to see and no ears to hear the people of Dulditch.

EDWARD GARNETT.

Drama:

Professional and Unprofessional.

LAST week gave one an amusing opportunity of contrasting the merits and the defects of the professional and the unprofessional kind of play. "The Gay Lord Quex" was revived at the Duke of York's Theatre, and Mr. Alexander produced at the St. James's Theatre a play called "The Finding of Nancy," which had been chosen by the committee of the Playgoers' Club out of a large number of plays sent in for competition. The writer, Miss Netta Syrett, has published one or two novels or collections of stories; but this, so far as I am aware, is her first attempt at a play. Both plays were unusually well acted; Miss Irene Vanbrugh was brilliant, masterly, and effective as Sophy Fullgarney, and Mr. Hare admirably sure and finished as Lord Quex; while Miss Lilian Braithwaite has never acted so well as in the part of Nancy, and Mr. Aubrey Smith was quite good in the part of her lover. The two plays, therefore, may be contrasted without the necessity of making allowances for the way in which they were interpreted on the stage.

Mr. Pinero is a playwright with a sharp sense of the stage, an eye for what is telling, a cynical intelligence which is much more interesting than the uncertain outlook of most of our playwrights. He has no breadth of view, but he has a clear view; he makes his choice out of human nature deliberately, and he deals in his own way with the materials that he selects. Before saying to himself: what would this particular person say or do in these circumstances? he says to himself: what would it be effective on the stage for this particular person to do or say? He suggests nothing, he tells you all he knows; he cares to know nothing but what immediately concerns the purpose of his play. The existence of his people begins and ends with their first and last

speech on the boards; the rest is silence, because he can tell you nothing about it. Sophy Fullgarney is a remarkably effective character as a stage-character, but, when the play is over, we know no more about her than we should know about her if we had spied upon her, in her own way, from behind some bush or keyhole. We have seen a picturesque and amusing exterior, and that is all. Lord Quex does not, I suppose, profess to be even so much of a character as that, and the other people are mere "humours," quite amusing in their cleverly contrasted ways. When these people talk, they talk with an effort to be natural and another effort to be witty; they are never sincere and without self-consciousness; they never say inevitable things, only things that are effective to say. And they talk in poor English. Mr. Pinero has no sense of style, of the beauty or expressiveness of words. His joking is forced and without ideas; his serious writing is common. In "The Gay Lord Quex" he is continually trying to impress upon his audience that he is very audacious and distinctly improper. The improprieties are childish in the innocence of their vulgarity, the audacities are no more than trifling lapses of taste. He shows you the interior of a Duchess's bedroom, and he shows you the Duchess's garter, in a box of other curiosities. He sets his gentlemen and ladies talking in the allusive style which you may overhear whenever you happen to be passing a group of London cabmen. The Duchess has written in her diary, "Warm afternoon." That means that she has spent an hour with her lover. Many people in the audience laugh. All the cabmen would have laughed.

Now look for a moment at the play by the amateur and the woman. It is not a satisfactory play as a whole, it is not very interesting in all its developments, some of the best opportunities are shirked, some of the characters (all the characters who are men) are poor. But, in the first place, it is well written. These people speak a language which is nearer to the language of real life than that used by Mr. Pinero, and when they make jokes there is generally some humour in the joke and some intelligence in the humour. They have ideas and they have feelings. The ideas and the feelings are not always combined with faultless logic into a perfectly clear and coherent presentment of character, it is true. But from time to time we get some of the illusion of life. From time to time something is said or done which we know to be profoundly true. A woman has put into words some delicate instinct of a woman's soul. Here and there is a cry of the flesh, here and there a cry of the mind, which is genuine, which is a part of life. Miss Syrett has much to learn if she is to become a successful dramatist, and she has not as yet shown that she knows men, as well as women; but at least she has begun at the right end. She has begun with human nature and not with the artifices of the stage, she has thought of her characters as people before thinking of them as persons of the drama, she has something to say through them, they are not mere lines in a pattern. I am not at all sure that she has the makings of a dramatist, or that if she writes another play it will be better than this one. You do not necessarily get to your destination by taking the right turning at the beginning of the journey. The one certain thing is that if you take the wrong turning at the beginning, and follow it persistently, you will not get to your destination at all. The playwright who writes merely for the stage, who squeezes the breath out of life before he has suited it to his purpose, is at the best only playing a clever game with us. He may amuse us, but he is only playing ping-pong with the emotions. And that is why we should welcome, I think, any honest attempt to deal with life as it is, even if life as it is does not always come into the picture.

ARTHUR SYMONS.

Art.

"It's human, but is it Art?"

THE higher art criticism may scold, but the jolly world, which is much more interested in the melodrama of life than in art, will always love the literary picture. "Tell me a story" is the universal cry of the child to the adult, of the inarticulate to the articulate. When the first baby could speak, that was its first petition to its mother. "Hold me tight and tell me a story" will be the prayer of the last baby to the last mother. The power to criticise the story, to disentangle the essential from the unessential, to prefer beauty and truth to brilliancy and bravura, comes later, or not to all. Hard is it for the epicure to emerge from the glutton, and hard is it for the Englishman to see with the eyes of the artist. Other, usefuller, and more perdurable qualities he may have (he built the Thames Embankment: his streets are excellently paved), but he is not innately an artist. The Frenchman is innately an artist. Walk through the Salons on a Sunday and compare the comments with the remarks that you will hear in the Royal Academy on a Bank Holiday. They criticise the painting: we consider the subject.

An acquaintance of mine, a good cricketer, and an honest man, who "did" the Royal Academy last week, remembered two pictures, and spoke of them with enthusiasm. These were "The Plague," by Mr. Collier, and "Kismet," by Mr. Dollman. "Splendid pictures," he said. I urged him to explain, to narrate the adventures of his soul among masterpieces, but although he was civil, and anxious to expand, he did not get beyond his first explosion of commendation—that they were splendid pictures. This was interesting, as I had marked in my catalogue against those pictures the ominous word—why? meaning why should painters with all the wonder and beauty of the world to choose from spend months on a picture of a man creeping away from the beautiful body of a plague-killed woman, or a picture of five vultures in a desert waiting for a skinny traveller to die. No doubt Mr. Collier and Mr. Dollman have an answer to the question: no doubt Mr. Millet had some intention in painting his enormous and quite uninteresting "Proclaiming the King": no doubt Mr. Dicksee had some motive in painting his theatrical illustration of a poem that cries aloud against pictorial treatment of this kind. But the intentions are to find, unless it be that hundreds of painters having once begun, must produce their picture or pictures each year with the regularity of an audit.

With frankly business pictures one has more sympathy. For example, Mr. Bacon's photographic presentment of the Lord Mayor welcoming home the C.I.V., with its hundreds of figures, and microscopic portraiture, has an air of plodding determination, and an avoidance of theatricality, that makes one treat it with the respect one gives to an official war despatch. It is not art, but it is honest labour. I cannot say as much for the many pictures of actual warfare. A picture inspired by a national emotion, and not from an emotion intimate to the artist himself, produces the emotion it deserves. Does Miss Kemp-Welch, who began so well with her free horses, surely a sight she had seen and gloried in, think that "The Morning," a picture of a dead soldier lying on the veldt, with his living horse sniffing the air of a new day, will impress the disciplined beholder with her sincerity? No: it was painted because the artist casting about for a subject decided that here was one that would express the current feeling. It is centripetal, not centrifugal, emotion. That is my view, although I willingly acknowledge that a vast number disagree with me. An acquaintance to whom I had been airing my theories with this picture as text, replaced her tea-cup on the table, folded her hands, and said: "It made me want to cry. I couldn't look at it again. It was too painful."

The same candid friend was communicative and commendatory about Mr. Chevallier Tayler's "Dinners and Diners" because it exposed to her, without personal effort, an interesting phase of life. She read stories into the looks and gestures of the diners. The technical cleverness of the painting, Mr. Tayler's chief accomplishment, had escaped her. Similarly she enjoyed Mr. Collier's "A Confession," for the sake of the spiritual tragedy that she read into this drawing-room melodrama—the penitent who is rather enjoying the emotion of confessing, the recipient who will suffer for both. This is the English way, very natural, and probably never to be exorcised from the Anglo-Saxon temperament. The Royal Academy exists by it.

There are perhaps a score of pictures in the present exhibition painted by artists who have the right, magical, unteachable quality in their blood; who kindle others, because their vision is individual, because mind and heart work conjointly with the craftsman's mastery over his material. The true artist knows life, and is yet detached from it; he is in it and yet not of it, a renunciation subtly noted by Mr. Charles Marriott in his novel *The Column*. Through a cause which readers of that able book will remember it was Bargister's good or ill fate to be "unhindered by that entanglement with the subject, the curse of plastic art. He achieved detachment before his majority, and without the loss of his illusions." To three-fourths, to seven-eighths of the exhibitions at the Academy, Bargister's lonely path is alien. Seven-eighths of the visitors do not care a penny either way. To the majority the Royal Academy remains what it always has been, a heterogeneous collection of episodes of life, more or less real, seen through another's eyes. It is a stationary biography, and all of us (even the superior person) have a frank or a sneaking liking for the episodic picture, for Plagues, Kismets, Confessions, Stories of a Rose, and Paardebergs. "It's human, but is it Art?"

The tale is as old as the Eden Tree—and new as the new-cut tooth—

For each man knows ere his lip-thatch grows he is master of Art and Truth;

And each man hears, as the twilight nears, to the beat of his dying heart,

The Devil drum on the darkened pane: "You did it, but was it Art?"

Art and Truth! What windlestraws we are in the pursuit. When the shepherds disagree, one may well pardon the flock for running hither and thither. Take the case of Mr. Swan, a man who in painting and sculpture has earned the right to be called artist, not producer. He sends two animal pictures to the exhibition, and here is the printed judgment of two of the most accomplished critics of the day on his work. One says: "In the sticky and fussy quality of his pigment, all trace of keen observation, much more of purposeful design, has disappeared. Nothing holds together either in tone or colour; the backgrounds are made up at haphazard." The other critic finds that "the creatures are partakers, in a rather subtle manner of colouring, with the hue of the dry, cold, and meagre earth they tread at nightfall; a noble and dreary blue involves the mountain landscape and sky." If I incline to the latter critic's view it is because nowhere else in the exhibition can I find such alert and sensitive drawing as in the forms of these prowling beasts, set, so unerringly, on the soil, and yet in looking at Mr. Swan's bronze group of "Boy, and Bear Cubs," and his silver "Polar Bears," accomplished as they are, it is just that lack of "purposeful design" that refuses them the epithet of great. They seem to have shaped themselves in his hands rather than to have obeyed the resolution of his brain. With matter, not with spirit, is the victory.

Mr. Swan's work, at least, insists on being examined and discussed, a claim that the pictures of the veterans of the Royal Academy do not sustain. Sir Edward Poynter,

Sir Alma Tadema, repeat themselves, with the difference that their works have modestly decreased in size. Sir Alma Tadema's "Caracalla" could be covered by a page of this journal, and if all one can say of this little work is that the unessentials, the tessellated pavement, the showers of petals and rose leaves, are painted, as before, with the same painstaking and laborious skill as the central objects of the picture, the work shows, at any rate, no sign of fatigue. As this painter was, he is, always the cheery and capable craftsman, no better, no worse than in former years. But you must look elsewhere for charm and vision.

When mind, and charm, and vision, and craftsmanship are united in one personality, then great art draws near. These are the days of cleverness, not of great art, and search as you will through the rooms of the Royal Academy it is not in subject pictures that the nation is drawing near to great art. In portraiture, in landscape, and in sculpture, mainly through the achievement of three men—Mr. Sargent, Mr. La Thangue, and Mr. Frampton—we make a better fight. Not one of the six sculpture exhibits that Mr. Frampton sends but shows a fine personality, expressing itself in strong and beautiful work; but who would be so bold to say the same of the painters of subject pictures? One is disposed favourably to Mr. Stanhope Forbes, whose "Lighting Up Time" has an unaffected simplicity of presentment, and a personal vision of the scene as it happened, that refreshes like a shower on a parched day. Among the Outsiders there is an idea, rare enough in these times, behind Mrs. Hunter's interesting and intelligent "Seekers: Where Shall Wisdom Be Found." But for the real thing in subject pictures—"infinite riches in a little room"—the common routine made beautiful because it was not looked at in the common way, one must go elsewhere, say, to the National Gallery, where the Dutchmen, our ancient foes, sit, in Art, throned and unassailed.

C. L. H.

Science.

The Life and Death of a Volcano.

THERE does not seem much doubt that the ultimate cause—the *causa causans* of a volcano—is the cooling of the earth. Year by year, as our tiny globe loses some part of the heat that it brought with it from its parent the sun, it shrinks in an infinitesimal degree, and this increases the pressure upon the masses of rocks, metals, and other elements stored in the interior of the earth. The older notion that these were all in a state of fusion is now abandoned in view of the extreme rapidity with which vibrations, such as those caused by earthquakes, travel through the earth, which argues, it is said, a far greater rigidity for the earth's centre than is to be found in a bar of steel. Whether a fluid exposed on all sides to enormous pressure might not be as rigid as a solid is, as Sir Robert Ball has lately said, open to question. But there are to be found places immediately below the earth's crust where—thanks no doubt to the wrappings or folds caused by the earth's contraction—the enormous pressure exercised upon the central mass is comparatively relaxed, and in these pockets there are certainly huge molten masses of silicon, aluminium, magnesium, calcium, iron, sodium, and potassium. These are, it will be seen, mostly the distinctive components of the alkaline earths, aluminium being the base of clay and calcium of chalk, while silicon, which behaves like an acid, is chiefly known to us as combining with a trace of the other substances to form flint. The enormous heat which keeps these refractory substances in a liquid state beggars description, and can only be equalled on the surface by that of the electric arc. If the crust of solid earth that covers one of these subterranean lakes of fire were normally

incapable of withstanding the upward pressure, that would happen which we see happen when an indiarubber ball filled with water through a hole in its skin is subjected to a violent squeeze, and the whole of its molten contents would be poured out through the vent. But this is not so. In ordinary times, the retaining skin of earth is quite equal to the task demanded of it. But when water trickles through into the fiery lake from the melting of surface ice and snow, as in the case of Hecla and the gigantic volcanoes of the Antarctic Continent, or by some hidden inlet from the sea, as with Vesuvius and Stromboli, or from the bursting of some subterranean reservoir as with the inland volcanoes of China, then the rebellious forces within receive the addition of cubic miles of superheated steam, and develop an energy which enables them to break down every obstacle. Seeking for the point of least resistance, they at length find the spot where some such cause as the denuding action of glaciers has reduced the earth's crust to its thinnest, and then they burst through with cataclysms which in a bygone period of the earth's history must have frequently changed the face of continents. If the ultimate cause of the formation of volcanic activity be the pressure caused by the earth's cooling, the proximate is certainly the infiltration of water from its surface.

As the Greeks would have said in old times, however, the gods beat the earth-born giants in the long run, and Nature will not for long allow her plans to be deranged with impunity. The masses of rock which the long-imprisoned steam at first hurls skyward must return by force of gravity to the earth, and fall near the centre of disturbance. Then the molten lava pouring from the orifice cools and hardens on exposure to the atmosphere, and thus heaps itself in a gradually contracting circle round the opening in which it first appears. And as the pressure within the rent becomes lessened by expansion, the stream becomes slower and more viscid, and thus less capable of travelling far from its original source. In this way a cone is formed, mounting slowly but surely higher and higher, and therefore calling for a greater and greater energy before the molten mass can be raised to its summit. At length a day comes when the force at the base of the mass becomes unequal to the task of raising it above the ever-rising cone, and it is stayed within the cone like water upheld by a gigantic vase. When this stage is reached, the volcano has become as we say quiescent, or has fallen asleep for a period which may be long or short, but of which we know that it will probably be followed by a time of activity the more awful the longer that it is deferred.

Very uneasy, though, is the sleep of the giant. In some volcanoes like Stromboli, the rumbling and shaking of the imprisoned mass seems to shake the sides of the cone into cracks and fissures, from which rise perpetually clouds of steam accompanied at intervals by small streams of lava. They are, in fact, volcanoes in miniature which act no doubt as safety-valves to the imprisoned forces, and thus prevent any more serious explosion. But in less-favoured mountains, the lava is always in a state of ebullition up to the very floor of the crater which forms, as it were, the sides of its containing vessel. Mephitic vapours, composed mostly of sulphuretted hydrogen produced by the combustion of sulphur in a liquid state with the constituent gases of the steam, hang over its summit. On these, the red-hot mass within casts a lurid shadow which gives rise to the illusion of a "burning mountain," and leads the gazer to believe that fire is actually issuing from the peak. In caves near the base, as in the famous Grotto del Cane at Naples, there is found, too, the deadly carbonic acid gas, formed from carbon exposed to such enormous pressure that it sometimes liquefies and crystallizes in the shape of diamonds. Geysers, too, and hot springs generally occur to testify to the perpetual presence of water within a measurable distance of the burning mass. And all this time the fiery torrent seems on the

brink of bursting forth. A few stones heaved into the crater, by affording a momentary outlet to the imprisoned gases, will provoke a small eruption followed by a shower of hot slag or a small flood of lava. And during this period of quiescence, the mountain is collecting its forces for another outburst. The gradual shrinking of the earth is forcing more of its molten elements up towards the lake of fire, and the subterranean stores of water which were depleted by the last explosion are being replenished. At length there comes a day when some fresh alteration of levels in the earth's interior, or perhaps some temporary alteration in the pressure of the earth's atmosphere, brings about a sudden increase of volcanic force. Then the wells and springs in the neighbourhood dry up, or the sea recedes from the land, showing that the water has found a new inlet. The inhabitants wise enough to profit by such signs move to a safer spot, and then comes a catastrophe always awful, but seldom, we may hope, as apocalyptic in its extent as that which has just startled the civilized world.

Oddly enough, it is only by means of these repeated eruptions that a volcano becomes extinct, or dies. Sometimes the walls of the containing cone are so thin or composed of such feebly-compacted materials that it is easier for the lava to break through them by lateral pressure than to raise itself to the very summit. When several of such fissures are formed, the lava bed or floor of the crater may become cool enough for earth to be deposited upon it, and so for a sort of seal to be put upon the top of the containing column, while the more liquid contents escape from cracks in its sides. Such an occurrence sometimes leads to the most awful explosions, such as seem to have occurred at Martinique, where, according to some accounts, the whole top of the mountain was blown bodily off. But in other cases, subsidiary peaks are found, which in turn become fissured, and thus acquire tops which, if the period of quiescence be sufficiently long, may end in altogether sealing the vent. Such a process seems to have taken place in the volcanic region of which the Isle of Skye, at an early period, was at once the centre and the site, according to some observers, of a volcano with a base of thirty miles in diameter. In this case certainly, and in others probably, the cooling of the crust was assisted by a fresh wrinkling of the earth's surface, which led to a slight elevation of the volcanic region above its surroundings, and thereby lessened the pressure on the underlying volcanic bed. But except by this self-sealing process, no volcano ever dies.

F. LEGGE.

Correspondence.

M. Maeterlinck's Apology for Nature.

SIR,—In your review of M. Maeterlinck's book you quote with seeming approval his vindication of Nature's ways, which is (as I understand it) to the effect that, though she does not appear to be just from our point of view, she may practice a scheme of morality unknown to us, in which she is just. Now, admit but the bare possibility of such a hidden morality, and she would go out of court without the slightest stain on her character, so certain should we feel that indifference to morality was beneath her greatness.

Far be it from my wish to disturb any comforting fantasy, if it be barely tenable. But alas, no profound reflection can be needed to detect the sophistry in M. Maeterlinck's argument, and to see that the original difficulty recognized by thinkers like Schopenhauer, Hartmann, Haeckel, &c., and by most of the persons called pessimists, remains unsurmounted.

Pain has been, and pain is: no new sort of morals in Nature can remove pain from the past and make it pleasure for those who are its infallible estimators, the bearers thereof. And no injustice, however slight, can be atoned for by her future generosity, however ample, so long as we consider Nature to be, or to stand for, unlimited power. The exoneration of an omnipotent Mother by her retrospective justice becomes an absurdity when we ask, what made the foregone injustice necessary to Her Omnipotence?

So you cannot, I fear, save her good name except by assuming one of two things: that she is blind, and not a judge of her actions, or that she is an automaton, and unable to control them; in either of which assumptions, though you have the chivalrous satisfaction of screening one of her sex, you only throw responsibility a stage further back.

But the story is not new. It is true, nevertheless, that, as M. Maeterlinck contends, to dwell too long amid such reflections does no good, and that to model our conduct on Nature's apparent conduct, as Nietzsche would have taught, can only bring disaster to humanity.—Yours truly,

THOMAS HARDY.

Max Gate, Dorchester.

The Raven and its Shadow.

SIR,—When Poe tells us in *The Philosophy of Composition* that "The Raven" was not written in a fine frenzy, but built up with the "precision and rigid consequence of a mathematical problem," he writes that minute criticism of which he was so fond himself.

A parrot as a *vox clamans*, he says, at once suggested itself, but was rejected for a raven, which would be more in consonance with the sombreness of the scene.

But how about the *locus* of the lamp? No room, then, would or could be illuminated by an over-door light, which he implies threw the raven's shadow on the floor.

Supposing a fanlight, i.e., a glazed window over the chamber door, which was obviously not an exterior one, a light in the corridor might throw the shadow, but there was "darkness."

An explanation is suggested by the fashion in Dublin houses of placing statuettes, mostly classical, inside the glazed over-door of the principal entrance—a practice it would appear derived from the visit of the Florentine carvers and modellers who came over and so beautifully decorated the Dublin interiors in the latter part of the eighteenth century.

As there are doubtless many variants of "The Parrot," the location of the light would exercise the ingenuity of a writer, especially if he wished to hide his indebtedness. Why not suppose a translucent tympanum admitting the rays of a westering sun, or, more likely, a strong Italian moon, thus lighting up the usual bust over the door of the hall, which, we know, in past times was used for all sorts of purposes, receptions, dining, waiting, &c.—Yours, &c.

P. M.

"Hallo, My Fancy."

SIR,—I am trying to find out who wrote the highly imaginative lines quoted in Gilfillan's *Less Known Poets*, p. 327, under the title "Hallo, My Fancy." Can any reader of the ACADEMY help and satisfy my quest?—Yours, &c.,

58, Richmond Road, Cardiff,
7 May, 1902.

W. E. WINKS.

Our Weekly Competition.

Result of No. 138 (New Series).

Last week we offered a prize of one guinea for the best description of "My Favourite Picture," the description not to exceed 150 words.

The prize has been awarded to Miss Evelyn Underhill, 3, Campden Hill Place, London, for the following:—

THE "SANTA CHIARA" OF SIMONE MARTINI.

She has stood for near six centuries a few paces from the tomb where her master S. Francis lies—not the S. Chiara of history, that stately intelligent Assisian who faced the Saracen invaders and left her impress on the world—but the informing soul of her order, the sweet spirit of Contemplative Poverty. Simone has seen her in a mystic's vision, very pale against her dim aureole of gold, the long drop of her eyelids beneath her white veil letting the soul peep through. Her lips wear the patient curve that they learnt in the slow lonely years after Francis died. She is very silent. At twilight, when a coloured darkness wraps the other saints, she wakes, her whiteness made shining by the last ray of western light. At such moments she is no longer earthly; and it is pleasant to think that whilst her companion saints may slumber, she comes back to watch by Francis' grave.

We print a few others:—

"DANTE'S DREAM," BY D. G. ROSSETTI.

This picture describes the dream of Dante, which came to him on the day when Beatrice died. Brought by the radiant and beautiful figure of Love, he finds himself at the bedside of his dead lady. Rossetti shows us Beatrice as an exquisite figure in white draperies, her beautiful hair flowing around her face, and her hands crossed on her breast with

"Such very humbleness

That she appears to say 'I am at peace.'"

Love bends over her and kisses her, Dante watching him with sorrowful eyes. The figures at either end hold up the pall laden with May flowers, before it covers Beatrice for ever.

It is a chamber of dreams which we see. The floor is thickly scattered with poppies, and birds the symbols of Love's presence hover near. In the distance we get a glimpse of the city of Florence.

[K. W., Bristol.]

"LE LAC," BY COROT.

I saw it at the Glasgow Exhibition. At first glance it struck one like a blow in the face, so much more vital was it than all the other pictures, and then the noisy gallery faded away, and I stood on the edge of the little lake that reflected the light, with the dark and silent woods all round. On the left a fisherman sat still in his straight flat boat. Over everything was an immense peace. One's soul trembled looking at it.

"Earth's crammed with heaven,

And every common bush afire with God;

But only he who sees, takes off his shoes."

The artist had seen,—had reached beyond the barrier of the superficial with a deeper vision—had felt intensely, and with a little grey paint communicates his feeling. It is by Corot, called—I think—"Le Lac," and is the most beautiful picture I have ever seen.

[E. R., Bushy.]

"AUTUMN LEAVES," BY MILLAIS.

I am never moved to deeper feeling than when I look on Sir John Millais's "Autumn Leaves."

It is the deep twilight of an autumn eve. Around a field of bright richly coloured leaves, which have been swept in a heap, four sad-faced girls are gathered; one holds a basket with lingering reluctance, as another slowly draws from it handfuls of leaves to throw on the sad pile. One edge has been ignited, and the smoke is beginning to arise and drift ominously; one little maid has ceased her sweeping, and has drawn near, broom in hand, to gaze askance and ruefully as though at one dead. A deep sense of the inevitableness of the tragedy is written on every childish face. Beyond them on the horizon, is the deep purple of the coming night, with the lingering tints of a vermillion sunset. One or two poplars stand silhouetted against the sky, black and naked.

[L. F., Manchester.]

"THE BLIND GIRL," BY MILLAIS.

Here is a country scene bathed in blazing sunlight, a striking contrast to the smoke and gloom of the manufacturing city which owns it. The sky is still dark with rain-clouds; but a rainbow and its reflection stand out from them in splendid relief. But the sun has come out and floods a glorious landscape. The field, the trees, and grassy slope beyond are a brilliant green after the summer shower. The key-note of the picture is struck by the figure of the "Blind Girl" sitting in the foreground, unable to gaze on the beautiful scene, although she drinks into her lungs the sweet fresh air.

Her small sister tightly clasps her hand, wondering at the Glory of God's world. The birds fly and play around; a butterfly settles on her cloak, and wild flowers of all kinds are smiling in the sunshine.
[G. B. C., Oxford.]

THE "MAGNIFICAT MADONNA," BY BOTTICELLI.

To my mind there is no picture in the world to equal this wonderful Madonna and Child, which hangs in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence.

Here is beauty, here is truth, here is peace, all perfect, each one fulfilling the ideal of the scholar severally and diversely, according to his peculiar adjustment of soul and intellect, but pleasing always, elevating always.

It is a thing to tremble at, this power which the old master possessed, to bring Beauty bound and chained within the narrow limits of a circular golden frame.

But being a man he knew only human mediums of expressions, and therefore his angels have souls of wonderful women shining through the eyes of beautiful children.

The face of the Madonna, encircled by the marvellous winding curves and mazes of heavy hair and veil and folded scarf, is the face of utter peace in the knowledge of the utmost grandeur of motherhood.

[C. M. C., London.]

"FLATFORD MILL," BY CONSTABLE.

As a boy Constable's "Flatford Mill" had a curious charm for me. With the mill itself I was never much engrossed, and have, indeed, not seldom wished it away. For then we should have had an unbroken view of that sunlit meadow that is so alluring in the background. There was my ideal country, and thither, into that delicate distance, I would escape each night, drawing with me—a beautiful company—the ideal people of my dreams. They must have known it well, but their breeding was of the most perfect, and they were always stirred afresh with the most satisfactory surprise, and as, in radiant file, they emerged from the bordering thicket, they would break into little silver cries of delight.

And now, though emptied of these or their kind, the charm of that little sunlit field still remains. It is like an epitome of summer.

[E. K. L., Colwyn Bay.]

We give a list of the pictures chosen:—

"Santa Chiara" - - - - -	By Simons Martini.
"Dante's Dream" (2) - - - - -	"D. G. Rossetti.
"Le Lac" - - - - -	"Corot.
"Autumn Leaves" - - - - -	"Millet.
"The Blind Girl" - - - - -	"Millet.
"Madonna e Bambino del Magnifico" - - - - -	"Botticelli.
"Sistine Madonna" (2) - - - - -	"Raphael.
"Flatford Mill" - - - - -	"Constable.
"An Archer" - - - - -	"Giorgione.
"Paysage" - - - - -	"Corot.
"L'Angelus" (2) - - - - -	"Millet.
"Work" - - - - -	"Ford Madox Brown.
"Love and Life" (2) - - - - -	"G. F. Watts.
"Concert" - - - - -	"Giorgione.
"Santa Beatrix" - - - - -	"D. G. Rossetti.
"The Doctor" (2) - - - - -	"Luke Fildes.
"Hope" - - - - -	"G. F. Watts.
"King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid" - - - - -	"Sir E. Burne-Jones.
"The Annunciation" - - - - -	"D. G. Rossetti.
"The Doge Lovelano" - - - - -	"Bellini.
"Love and Death" (2) - - - - -	"G. F. Watts.
"La Femme à l'Éventail" - - - - -	"Velasquez.
"The Water Baby" - - - - -	"Draper.
"Light of the World" (3) - - - - -	"Holman Hunt.
"Ruth and Naomi" - - - - -	"Calderson.
"I wonder who lived there?" - - - - -	"Sir Noel Paton.
"St. John and Saints" - - - - -	"Fra Filippo Lippi.
"Harmony" - - - - -	"Frank Dicksee.
"Napoleon in Hell" - - - - -	"Wiertz.
"Birth of Nature" - - - - -	Artist unknown.
"Dignity and Impudence" - - - - -	By Lambseer.
"The Crucifixion" - - - - -	"Guido Reni.
"The Blessed Damsel" - - - - -	"D. G. Rossetti.
"The Soul's Awakening" - - - - -	"Sant.

Competition No. 139 (New Series).

This week we offer a prize of One Guinea for the best paper, not exceeding 300 words, on "My First Effort in Literature."

RULES.

Answers, addressed, "Literary Competition, THE ACADEMY, 43, Chancery Lane, W.C.," must reach us not later than the first post of Wednesday, 21 May, 1902. Each answer must be accompanied by the coupon to be found on the second page of Wrapper, or it cannot enter into competition. Competitors sending more than one attempt at solution must accompany each attempt with a separate coupon; otherwise the first only will be considered. Contributions to be written on one side of the paper only.

New Books Received.

THEOLOGICAL AND BIBLICAL.

Chase (Frederic Henry), The Credibility of the Book of The Acts of the Apostles (Macmillan) net	6/0
Jowett (J. H.), Brooks by the Traveler's Way (Allenson) net	3/6
Saunders (Thomas Bailey), Professor Harnack and his Oxford Critics (Williams and Norgate) net	1/0
Bacon (Benjamin W.), The Sermon on the Mount (Macmillan) net	4/6
Aitken (W. Hay, M.A.), The Divine Ordinance of Prayer (Wells Gardner) net	3/6

POETRY, CRITICISM AND BELLES LETTRES.

Cow (William), Drift of Isla (Stoek) net	2/6
Adams (W. A.), Horn Fugues: Poems () net	3/6
Bourdillon (Francis William), Through the Gateway (Humphreys) net	2/6

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.

Fraser (John Foster), The Real Siberia (Cassell) net	6/0
How (F. D.), A Hero of Donegal: Dr. William Smyth (Isbister) net	2/6
Griffiths (Major Arthur), Life of Napoleon (Treherne) net	3/6
Carmichael (Montgomery), edited by, The Life of John William Walsh (Murray) net	6/0
Author of "Collections and Recollections," An Onlooker's Note-Book (Smith, Elder) net	7/6
Emerson, junr. (Edwin), A History of the Nineteenth Century, Year by Year, 3 vols. (Collier)	
Sharpe (Reginald), edited by, Calendar of Letter Books of the City of London: Letter Book D. (The Corporation of the City of London)	
Collins (William Edward), edited by, Typical English Churchman, from Parker to Maurice (S.P.C.K.) net	7/6
Dutt (Ramesh), The Economic History of British India (Kegan Paul)	7/6
Lane-Poole (Stanley), Mediaeval Towns: Cairo (Dent) net	4/6
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